



Presentation Design Tips Workbook

Step-by-Step Tips on Crafting Your Message and Designing Your Next Slide Presentation

PLEASE NOTE: This is a restricted demonstration copy of the workbook. To access the fully fillable version, please contact the author at adele.sommers@gmail.com.

This workbook accompanies the video series “Tips on Crafting Your Message and Designing Your Next Slide Presentation.”

For a synopsis of what this module covers, refer to the overview at right.

As you go through each video, let the workbook be your guide, as well as a **tool for recording your creative ideas and impressions.**

Tip: For best results, use Adobe Acrobat Reader DC or later to fill in and save the workbook forms. Earlier versions (e.g., 9.x) might not support saving your entries.

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Introduction to Crafting Your Message & Designing Your Slides



In this module, you'll learn how to craft a compelling **verbal and visual story** that will leave an unforgettable impression on your audiences.

Whenever you plan to deliver a talk in front of a live or online audience, you might choose to create a slideshow to amplify your message. But despite how common slideshows are, isn't this often easier said than done?

Many people don't yet know what's required to create an effective visual narrative, and are equally turned off by the ones other speakers produce.



Question:

What are some of the common **complaints** you hear (or express yourself) about the presentations you normally attend?

Whether the presentations are for business, marketing, educational, social, philanthropic, technical, scientific, or some other purpose, the critiques are fairly universal.

Tip: As you follow along with the video series, use this workbook to capture your ideas and reflections.

You can type your ideas directly into the forms and preserve them by saving the document. Or print the forms and fill out by hand.

Answer:

How about:

- "They're usually too bullet-heavy."
- "The text is often too small to read."
- "People tend to read from their slides."
- "There's far too much information."
- "They're dull and unimaginative!" And...
- "The animations whiz by so fast, they're way too distracting!"

~~~~~

**However**, as much as we strive to finesse our slides, they don't always produce the desired results.

Our audiences might not "get" our most important points, or they may not feel inclined to take the actions we want.

*So, what should we do?*

## We Need a Personalized Way to Speak to Our Audiences

Our goal is to produce outstanding presentations — that vividly impart ideas and then spark the follow-up interactions we seek.

We need a **workable and repeatable formula** to use for every project!

If you've already completed the **"Presentation Needs Assessment"** video course, you've built a solid foundation for researching your audience's needs, wants, and goals.

**Keep those notes handy** while you go through this workbook, and use them to make your design choices as you visualize your story.

**Those insights** will inform every aspect of your next presentation's purpose, which includes building a solid rapport with your audience!

Keep in mind that slide software is **really just a blank canvas** on which you can paint anything you want.

**But what exactly should you paint on that canvas, and why?**

Consider the idea that you're not only creating a presentation, but an **entire audience experience**.

That experience involves a variety of visual, auditory, informational, emotional, and persuasive elements that can range from highly **effective** to highly **ineffective**.



## Thinking About It a Different Way...

**Imagine yourself as a tour guide** leading an expedition of sightseers through an unfamiliar landscape.

Your group is counting on you to know the route, highlight the key features, and navigate unexpected conditions.

They'll also want you to narrate the story of each upcoming attraction in a way that will make the journey memorable.

A well-designed presentation, with a clear structure, engaging visuals, and a steady pace, is like traveling with a seasoned chaperone.

You feel informed, engaged, and glad you joined the tour!

**With a thoughtful roadmap** that has clear signposts, comfortable pacing, and striking visual landmarks, you can create an experience that's not just informative, but immersive and unforgettable as well.

So, the best guides don't just impart information. They lead people on an exploration that stays with them long after the excursion is over, by **helping them discover key ideas** — and not just rush past them.



## As the Tour Guide of Your Own Presentation...

You can use a set of proven, research-based principles to help your audiences more easily assimilate your ideas, then take the actions you're hoping for.

That's why this module explains seven major presentation-design **dilemmas** and related **mistakes** that many people make.

You'll also see a series of relevant **tips** for resolving each dilemma, based on extensive studies on how people learn.

The dilemmas and tips are divided into **two key sections**:

**Section 1 is "Crafting Your Message,"** explained in Parts 1–3.

- Part 1 - Brainstorming your topics
- Part 2 - Focusing on your audience
- Part 3 - Paring down your topic list

**Section 2 is "Designing Your Slides,"** explored in Parts 4–7.

- Part 4 - Reducing text on your slides
- Part 5 - Selecting relevant graphics
- Part 6 - Simplifying complex images
- Part 7 - Choosing special effects

Best of all, you can use those tips in any slideshow you create, regardless of the medium or platform you use.



On the pages that follow, you'll launch your storytelling journey with the first installment of **Crafting Your Message!**

## SECTION 1: CRAFTING YOUR MESSAGE



## Part 1: Brainstorming and Evaluating Your Topic Ideas



### Section 1: Crafting Your Message

This section of the course walks you through three key aspects of storytelling:

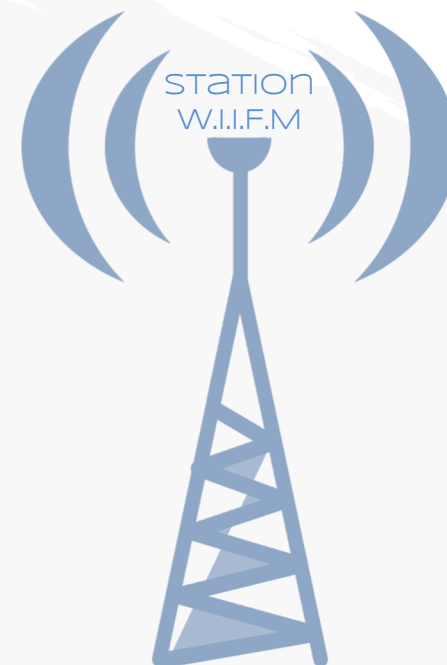
- **Part 1** (this chapter) discusses brainstorming and evaluating your initial list of topic ideas.
- **Part 2** explores focusing your story on your audience rather than yourself, and
- **Part 3** examines how to avoid information overload by paring down your list of topics.

**Part 1** focuses on the very first steps you'd take to compose your story.

To help ensure that your narrative comes across loud and clear, you'll want to broadcast on radio station **W.I.I.F.M.** — “**What’s In It For Me.**”

We covered in detail how to tune into your audience’s frequency in the preceding **Presentation Needs Assessments** course.

This perspective is crucial because to make the impact you seek, the story you tell — and the way you tell it — is just as important as illustrating your slides.



#### Key Goals for Part 1:

- Identifying your initial list of topic ideas
- Gauging the relevance of each potential topic
- Rating the relevance as high, medium, or low

*On the next page, begin delving into the dilemmas, mistakes, and tips for Part 1...*

## Dilemma #1: Quickly Brainstorming “Idea Lists”

It’s natural to build a narrative by quickly generating a list of initial ideas. And in doing so, you’re likely to identify **quite a few topics** and subtopics that you might want to cover.

In the past, you may have simply copied those piles of ideas onto your slides, without doing too much more to organize them.

In fact, that’s the way many of us learned to design presentations!

And we’ve simply passed down the same lackluster habits from one workplace generation to the next.

Although this method might seem like an expedient way to whip up a slideshow, it rarely results in a message that sticks. **So, why can’t we simply stop there?**



## Mistake #1: Forcing Your Listeners to Organize Your Ideas

Presenting a loose collection of idea lists will cause your listeners to silently wonder, “Is this flow making any sense?”

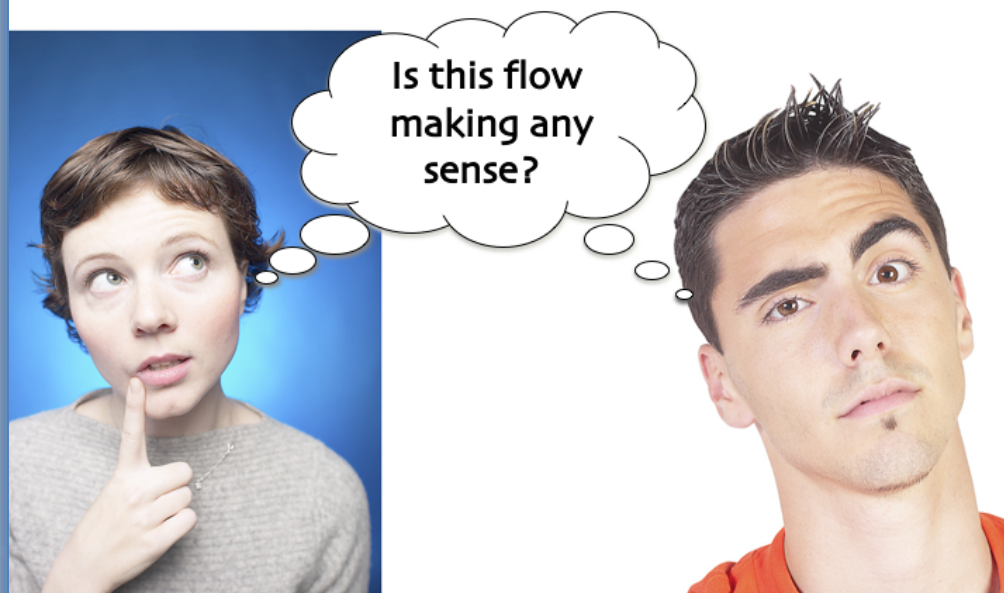
Without any refinement, your idea lists could come across as random musings instead of a logical and sequential story arc.

It could distract people from ever fully absorbing your message!

That’s why brainstorming topics is only the first step in crafting your message.

If the stakes are high, and you need to create an unforgettable impression, you’ll want to do much more “heavy lifting” in advance to ensure your audience can easily follow along.

**Mistake:** Presenting a loose collection of “idea lists” forces **your listeners** to **organize** them



*So, how do you avoid the mistake of burdening your listeners?*

## Tip #1: Assess Your Topics from Your Audience's Perspective

Since you've likely brainstormed a long list of topic ideas, you'll want to **weed out the extraneous items** to avoid covering things that your audience doesn't care about.

To do this, you'll weigh the topics against your audience's **questions, worries, needs, and goals**.

### Ask yourself...

Does this topic answer a burning **question**?

Does it address a big **worry** or concern?

Does it resolve a **need**, problem, or challenge?

Does it support a **goal**, dream, or aspiration?

For example, if your attendees worry about tight deadlines, a topic that helps them save time will likely rank higher than one that simply sounds interesting.

*Note: You'll find related forms and worksheets at the end of each chapter.*

Tip: Assess your topic ideas from your audience's perspective...



Weigh the topics against your audience's questions, worries, needs, and goals

|                | ↓<br>Questions             | ↓<br>Worries                     | ↓<br>Needs                 | ↓<br>Goals                            |
|----------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Topic Ideas    | Answers a burning question | Addresses a big worry or concern | Resolves a problem or need | Supports a goal, dream, or aspiration |
| Topic idea #1: |                            |                                  |                            |                                       |
| Topic idea #2: |                            |                                  |                            |                                       |

## Some Topics Will Be More Relevant than Others

From your audience’s perspective, certain topics will have more value and relevance than others.

By using the four key questions to assess the ideas you’ve generated, you can rate the relevance of each topic as **high, medium, or low**.

Then you’ll be able to **discard** topics with lower ratings — even if they’re your favorite things to talk about.

For example, let’s say you’re going to give a presentation on a new employee **fitness program** at your organization.

Which do you think your audience would relate to more, a topic on the **benefits** of using the program, or on the **history** of fitness programs?

If you said “**benefits**” rather than “**history**,” you’re probably right!

Some topics will be of **greater relevance** than others from your audience’s point of view

HIGHER RELEVANCE

| Topic Ideas                                              | Answers a burning question | Addresses a big worry or concern | Resolves a problem or need | Supports a goal, dream, or aspiration |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Topic idea #1:<br><u>Benefits</u> of healthcare programs | High                       | High                             | High                       | High                                  |
| Topic idea #2:<br><u>History</u> of healthcare programs  | Medium                     | Low                              | Low                        | Low                                   |

LOWER RELEVANCE

## If You Conducted an Audience Pre-Survey...

You'll have another way to gauge the relevance of each topic idea. If you **pre-surveyed** your audience (as explained in the preceding course, "Presentation Needs Assessments"), you'll have a lot of valuable input.

Using those results, you can bounce your topic ideas against the **burning issues** your prospective attendees have identified — and then choose the most relevant topics.

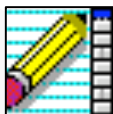
This method would remove much of the **guesswork** required to pinpoint a prospective audience's questions, worries, needs, and goals.

But even without using an audience pre-survey, you can still refer to the **persona profiles** you created during the previous course. Those profiles can provide **valuable clues** on what your audience's top issues might be.

You'll also have another way to gauge the **relevance** of each topic idea if you conducted an audience **pre-survey**



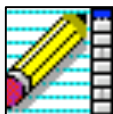
*Using the worksheets that follow, generate and assess your own **topic** and **subtopic** ideas...*



**Activity 1-1: Brainstorm and record your topic and subtopic ideas**

Type your thoughts into the form below and then save it, or print out the page and complete by hand. Keep in mind that this is only the **first pass**, so don't try to filter or judge the topic ideas just yet.

| Topic Ideas               | Subtopic Ideas                                                            |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Topic idea #1: (describe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> </ul> |
| Topic idea #2: (describe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> </ul> |
| Topic idea #3: (describe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> </ul> |
| Topic idea #4: (describe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> </ul> |
| Topic idea #5: (describe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> </ul> |
| Topic idea #6: (describe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> </ul> |
| Topic idea #7: (describe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> </ul> |



### Activity 1-2: Assess your topics from your audience's perspective

In the form, type or write in the kinds of **questions, worries, needs, and goals** your audience members might have, and note how each topic might address them. (Refer back to your **pre-survey responses** or **persona profiles** as needed.)

| Your Topic Ideas | Answers a burning question? | Addresses a big worry or concern? | Resolves a problem or need? | Supports a goal, dream, or aspiration? |
|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Topic idea #1:   |                             |                                   |                             |                                        |
| Topic idea #2:   |                             |                                   |                             |                                        |
| Topic idea #3:   |                             |                                   |                             |                                        |
| Topic idea #4:   |                             |                                   |                             |                                        |
| Topic idea #5:   |                             |                                   |                             |                                        |
| Topic idea #6:   |                             |                                   |                             |                                        |
| Topic idea #7:   |                             |                                   |                             |                                        |



### Activity 1-3: Reflections on Part 1

Type your thoughts into the form below and then save, or print out the page and complete by hand.

Are you surprised by the number of initial topic and subtopic ideas you generated? What else stood out?

Did you find your pre-survey results or persona profiles helpful for evaluating your initial ideas? If so, how?

When you've finished, proceed to **Part 2** to determine who is the *real star* of your presentation...

## Part 2: Focusing on Your Audience Rather Than Yourself

Refer to the Part 2 video in the series

Part 2 continues exploring how to **structure and shape** your message.

These considerations are crucial, since the story you convey — and the way you convey it — matter just as much as the design of your slides.

For example, your presentation slides might be beautifully styled with many stunning graphic components.

**But if your story is weak** or loses the plot, your audience will leave underwhelmed.

So, let's delve into a possible cause of this outcome by asking...

*"Who's the star of your show?  
You — or your audience?"*



### Key Goals for Part 2:

- Tuning into your audience's "W.I.I.F.M"
- Framing their roles, perspectives, & needs
- Putting topics through a "so what" test

## Dilemma #2: “That’s Enough About Me...”

“What do *you* think about me?”

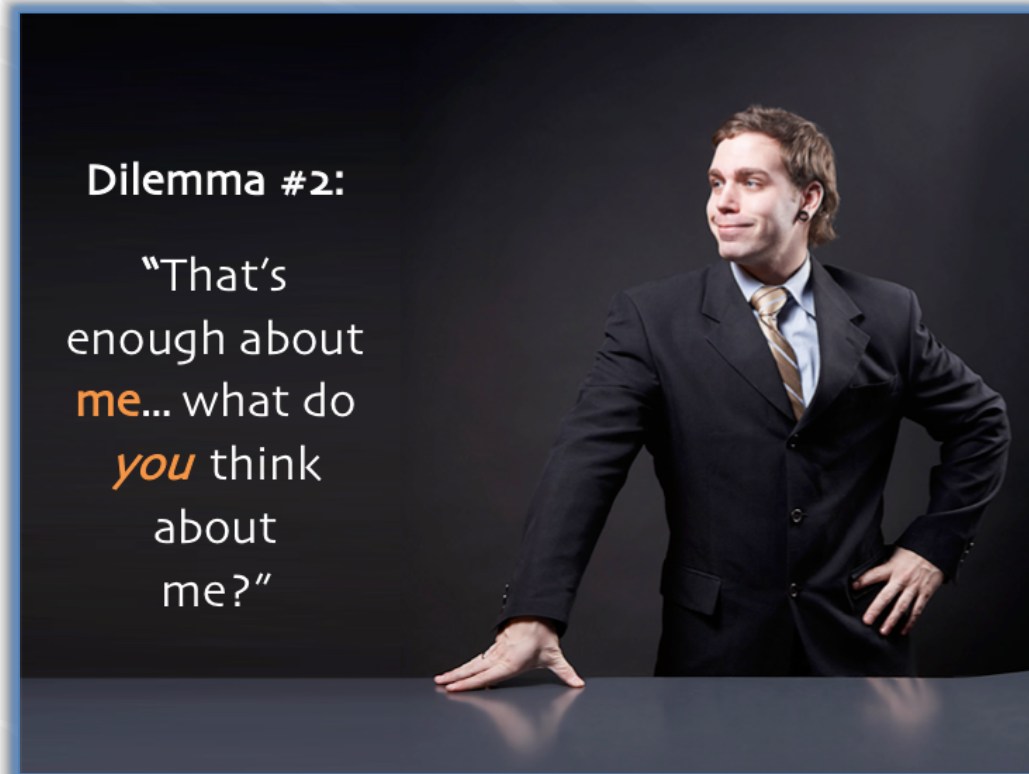
There’s no question that you’ve led a fascinating life, and that your profession and company history are equally impressive.

Therefore, you might be tempted to kick off your narrative with a **long, detailed profile of yourself** and your organization.

Have you ever had to endure a presentation like that?

Sharing this kind of in-depth back-story might be highly strategic at pivotal points in your speech...

**But is starting off your talk** by discussing your résumé really the best way to grab your audience’s attention?



## Mistake #2: Focusing Your Story All on You...

Making your story all about *you* can cause attendees to wonder whether *they* have any part in your story, and what's in it for *them*.

A common misstep is starting your talk with a long bio sketch or taking a deep dive into your organization's credentials. *Boring!*

As a reminder, whenever you're *not* communicating on **station W.I.I.F.M.** (What's In It For Me), your audience will notice it right away.

They'll quickly conclude that *their* highest priorities are very different from *yours*.

In that situation, what happens next? Will they begin tuning out and even start heading for the exits?

**Mistake:** Focusing your story all on **you** can cause people to wonder what's in it for **them!**



*Here's how you can avoid those awkward situations...*

## Tip #2: Frame Your Attendees' Roles, Perspectives, and Needs

To avoid making your message all about *you*, this tip helps you frame your presentation around whatever your audience cares about most.

If you were able to **pre-survey** your audience, you can launch your talk by summarizing the fundamental **hot-button** issues they've raised.

But even if you didn't have a chance to reach out ahead of time, you can **still poll your attendees** at the start of your talk to collect their burning questions, challenges, or concerns.

Then, as you introduce your central topics, insights, and solutions, **you can weave in the expertise** you bring.

By disclosing your know-how and relevant skills **precisely when they matter**, you can share the pertinent details without turning people off.

Listeners will pay far more attention if you **place them at the center** of your universe. You can then tell *your* story as you address their priorities!

**Tip:** Begin by framing your attendees' roles, perspectives, and needs



Listeners will pay far more attention if you place **them at the center** of your universe!



## You Can Put Each Topic Through a “So What?” Test

Keep in mind that just because your topics are interesting to *you* doesn't ensure they'll resonate with others.

To double-check the relevance from your audience's point of view, you can screen your topics by applying the “so what?” test to each one.

*What is that?*

That's when you'd ask, “So what?” several times to gauge how much a topic matters to your audience.

So, when considering whether to include a given topic, imagine your listeners' precious attention spans. People will need to feel an instant connection between your story and

theirs to reinforce that **they're the stars of your show** — and the lead characters in your talk.

If they see their own interests clearly reflected in your mirror, they'll be far more willing to invest their time and attention!

*Here's another piece of the puzzle...*

Ask “so what?” several times to gauge how much a topic matters to your **audience**



Your thoughtful **messaging** will signal that **your listeners** are the lead characters in your talk!



## Your Attendees Won't Know What They Don't Know...

You may think you can easily assess each topic using the "so what?" test, which could be true for topic ideas that closely match any hot-button concerns your audience has raised.

Your **pre-survey results** can provide a wealth of insights to help you label and describe people's burning issues. We'll put those into the "**Topics Your Audience Is Familiar With**" category.

For those items, you can simply state the **issue**, explain your **solution**, and describe the **benefits** of the solution.

But what about **unfamiliar topics** that your audience will also need to know to make sense of the solutions to their highest-priority issues?

Since people won't know what they don't know, or why they'd need to know it, we'll put those issues into the "**Topics Your Audience Is Not Familiar With**" category.

If you present those topics without background explanations, attendees might wonder, "**So what exactly is the purpose of this discussion?**"

In those situations, you'll want to:

State the **issue** and begin expanding on it, signaling that there's more to the subject than meets the eye.

Explain **why it matters**, define **new terms**, and **give examples** if needed.

Finally, reveal your **solution** and the **benefits** of that solution.

That way, you can **connect the dots** to your listener's top priorities — and give them a much better foundation.

*Try this exercise yourself, next...*

### Topics Your Audience Is Familiar With

- State the issue
- Explain your solution
- Describe the benefits

### Topics Your Audience Is Not Familiar With

- State the issue, then expand on it
- Explain why it matters**
- Define any new terms**
- Give examples if needed**
- Explain your solution
- Describe the benefits



**Activity 2-1: Put your topics through the “so what?” test**

In the form, type or write in notes about each of your topic ideas. Will your audience already be **familiar** with it, and is it one of their **burning issues**? Or might they **not be familiar** with it, and not care about it until they’re given more information?

| Your Topic Ideas | Topics Your Audience Is Familiar With (and Cares About) | Topics Your Audience Is Not Familiar With (and May Not Care About) |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Topic idea #1:   |                                                         |                                                                    |
| Topic idea #2:   |                                                         |                                                                    |
| Topic idea #3:   |                                                         |                                                                    |
| Topic idea #4:   |                                                         |                                                                    |
| Topic idea #5:   |                                                         |                                                                    |
| Topic idea #6:   |                                                         |                                                                    |
| Topic idea #7:   |                                                         |                                                                    |



### Activity 2-2: Reflections on Part 2

Type your thoughts into the form below and then save it, or print out the page and complete by hand.

Did you gain any new insights about how closely your initial topic ideas match your audience's hot-button issues?

In what ways might you need to build a bridge between what your audience *wants* to know and *needs* to know?

When you've finished, proceed to **Part 3** to explore a challenging question: how much information is too much?

## Part 3: Paring Down Your Topics to Avoid Audience Overload

Refer to the Part 3 video in the series

Part 3 explores how to **avoid overwhelming your audience** with too much information. This is a vital aspect of crafting a message that sticks. We'll explore:

- Why your **audience's limitations** should dictate what you present
- How **“working memory”** plays a critical role in how much input your listeners can absorb
- How to ensure that the vital parts of your message make it into your attendees' **long-term memories**

### Key Goals for Part 3:

- Discarding your less-relevant topic ideas
- Organizing all others into 3-4 key themes
- Finding ways to summarize strategically



*You can probably relate to this next challenge, since it's very common...*

## Dilemma #3: We Love Telling People Everything We Know!

This is a **familiar predicament** since many of us love talking about our areas of expertise. Given a chance, we could go on forever!

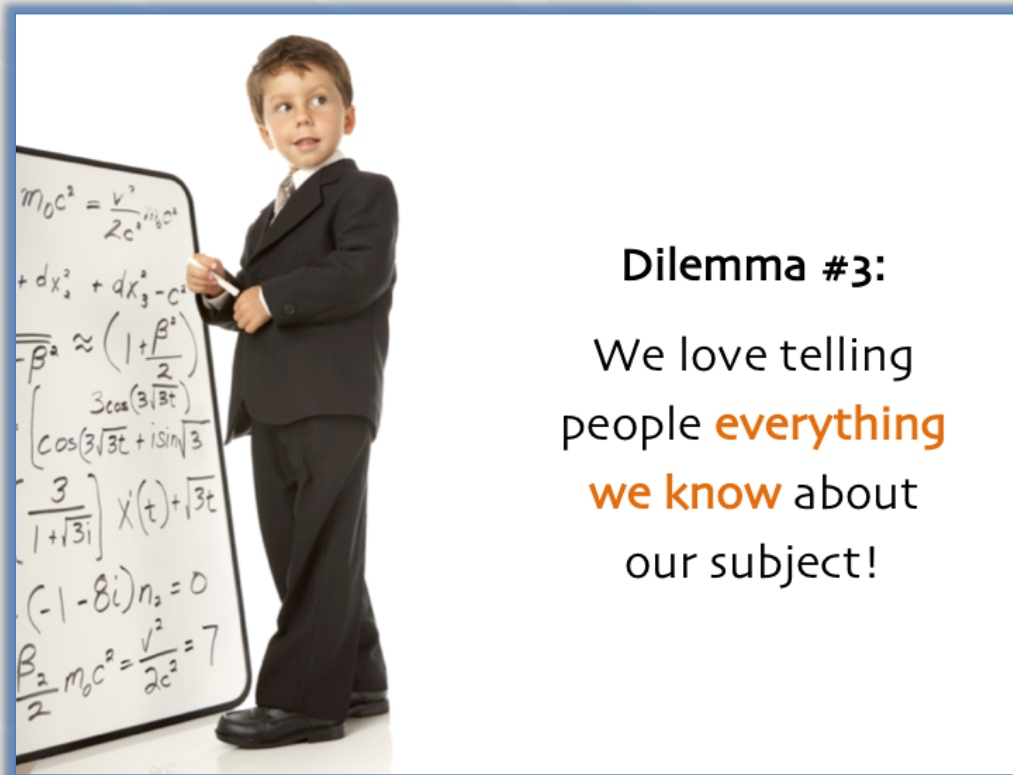
Recall that in **Tip #1 in Part 1**, some topics will be more important than others to your audience.

You reviewed your initial topics to assess how aligned they might be to your audience's **questions, worries, needs, and goals** — then rated their relevance as **high, medium, or low**.

Yet even after trimming down to what truly matters, you might still end up with a **long list of issues**.

But if your story is well structured, is there any real downside to covering every talking point on your agenda?

*Let's find out...*



**Dilemma #3:**  
We love telling  
people **everything**  
**we know** about  
our subject!

### Mistake #3: Presenting Too Many Main Topics

If you attempt to cover **too many bases**, it can reduce your audience's ability to absorb your key points.

Once your attendees hit their limit for making sense of the firehose of information coming their way, they might start tuning out.

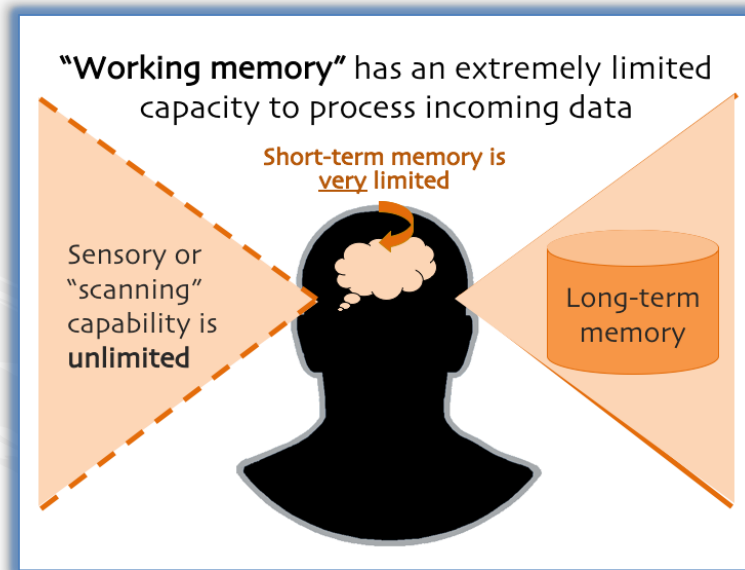
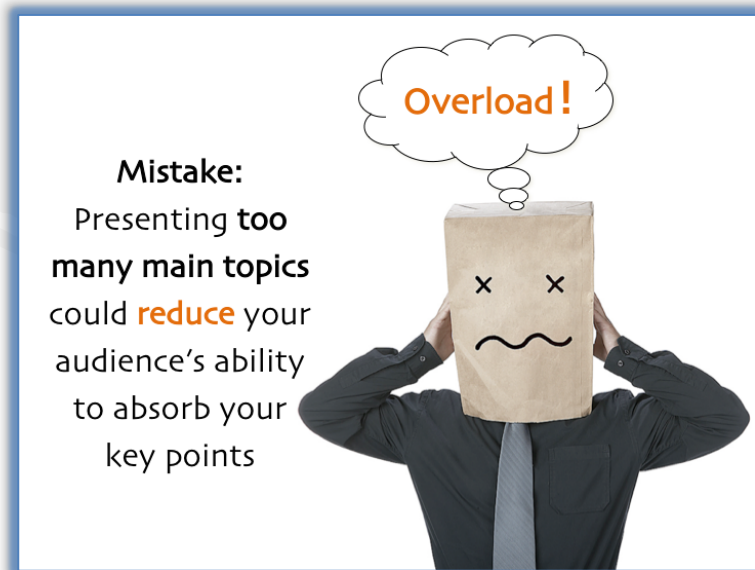
*What's the reason for that?*

**"Working memory"** (also known as "short-term memory") has an extremely limited capacity for processing incoming data.

Our working memory constraints mean that just because attendees **see or hear** something you present doesn't mean they'll remember it.

On the pages that follow, we'll dive more deeply into how these memory limitations work and what they mean for your verbal and visual messaging.

The more attention you can pay to **supporting working memory** as you design your slides, the more effective your presentations will be! *Here's why...*



## Working Memory Is Like a Tiny Waiting Room...

Working memory is like a miniature waiting area at a doctor's office that's **so cramped**, just a few arriving details can create a traffic jam.

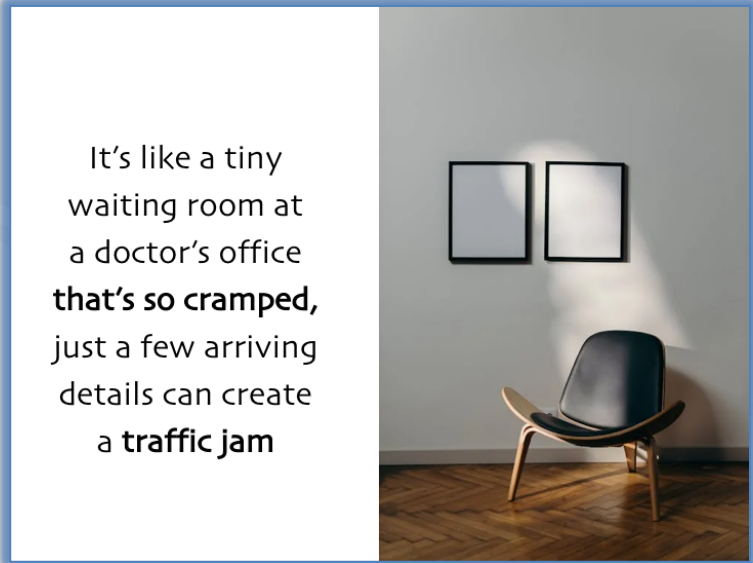
Yet **an unlimited stream of input** is coming through our senses, waiting to be decoded, packaged, and stored. How well does that work?

Due to our brain's limitations, only a tiny fraction of what goes in will be successfully transferred to **long-term memory**, the final destination.

This means that much of what you present to your audience could get **stuck in that waiting room**, never making it through.

Once your attendees become overwhelmed, they may have difficulty storing, retaining, and recalling your ideas.

They might even tune out entirely, and leave without learning anything!  
*So how can you avoid this dilemma?*



### Tip #3: Organize Your Ideas into Just 3 to 4 Main “Suitcases”

The best practice is to divide up your content into just a **handful** of highly relevant groupings. Why is that?

Research has shown that people can realistically process only **about 3 to 4 chunks** of content at a time. That’s due to the limits of that tiny waiting room known as “working memory.”

This means that to avoid drowning your audience, plan to present only your highest-ranking topics — those that rose to the top when you rated them **high, medium, or low** in Part 1.

This is the same list of topics that you put through the “**so what**” test in Part 2 (Activity 2.1).

Next, take the time to organize the highest-ranking topics into no more than **3 to 4 main “suitcases”** of ideas.

Those clusters will then become the topmost sections or chapters of your talk. They’ll help your audience more easily absorb and retain your ideas.

*Why is this technique effective?*



You’ll want to select only the **3 to 4 highest-ranking** topics for your talk!

|                          |                 |        |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Topic #1: _____ | High ✓ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Topic #2: _____ | High ✓ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Topic #3: _____ | High ✓ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Topic #4: _____ | High ✓ |

## More Insight into Why Chunking Works

If you want attendees to understand your message, retain it for future use, and retrieve and apply it in the right situations...

It's much easier for people to absorb a **short list of big ideas** than a **big list of small ones**.

Here's why that matters...

For example, let's say you want to present 6, 8, 10, or more big ideas — without also organizing them into a smaller number of groups.

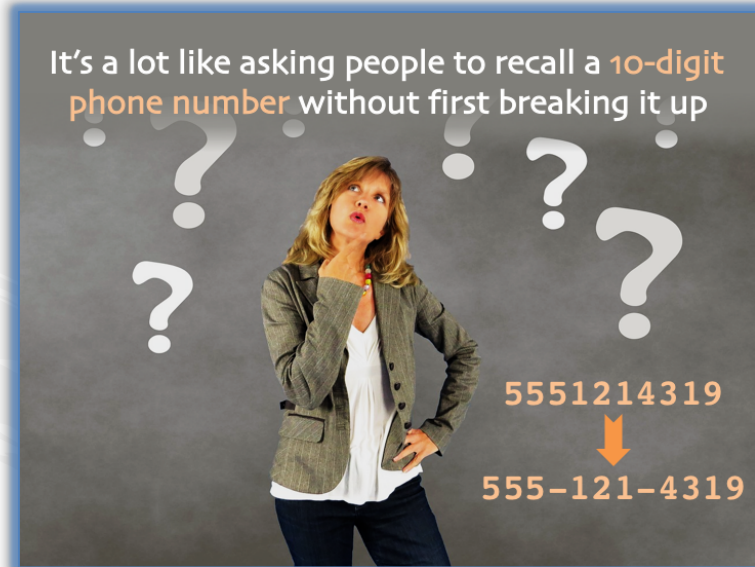
It's a lot like asking people to recall a **10-digit phone number**, without first breaking it into an **area code**, **prefix**, and **suffix**.

That's why phone numbers are always **divided into sections** — because they are far easier for our brains to absorb and remember.

So, by distilling your topics down to just a handful of primary subjects, it enables your audience to focus on the **3 to 4 most memorable "takeaways."**

It's much easier for attendees to absorb a **short list of big ideas** than a **big list of small ones**

| Short list: | Big list:     |                |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| Big Idea #1 | Small Idea #1 | Small Idea #9  |
| Big Idea #2 | Small Idea #2 | Small Idea #10 |
| Big Idea #3 | Small Idea #3 | Small Idea #11 |
| Big Idea #4 | Small Idea #4 | Small Idea #12 |
|             | Small Idea #5 | Small Idea #13 |
|             | Small Idea #6 | Small Idea #14 |
|             | Small Idea #7 | Small Idea #15 |
|             | Small Idea #8 | Small Idea #16 |



 **And Here's an Extra Tip: Summarize Along the Way**


By summarizing your talk along the way, you'll support your listeners' short-term memories, keeping their hot-button issues front and center.

What does a **good summary** entail?

- For example, at the conclusion of each section or chapter of your talk, you could **briefly recap** the key points you've just presented.
- At the same time, you might invite a concise **Q & A session** to address anything that might be unclear to the audience.
- Another option is to engage the audience in **short exercises**, such as asking attendees to turn to a person next to them and have a brief conversation about the topic.

In the next few worksheets, proceed to pinpoint your 3 to 4 key themes by focusing on your highest-rated topics.

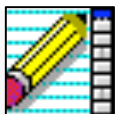
**Tip:** By summarizing your talk at strategic points, you'll support your listeners' short-term memories!



The image displays a grid of 12 numbered worksheet thumbnails, each illustrating a different strategy for organizing and presenting content. The thumbnails include:

- 1:** A 'Dilemma #1' about building a talk by quickly brainstorming 'idea lists'.
- 2:** A tip on presenting a loose collection of 'idea lists' to help listeners organize them.
- 3:** A tip on why brainstorming topic ideas is the first step in crafting a message.
- 4:** A tip to assess topic ideas from the audience's perspective.
- 5:** A worksheet titled 'Weigh the topics against your audience's questions, worries, needs, and goals' with a table for tracking.
- 6:** A worksheet titled 'Some topics will be of greater relevance than others from your audience's viewpoint' with a 'TOPIC RELEVANCE' matrix.
- 7:** A 'Dilemma #2' about focusing on 'me' vs 'you'.
- 8:** A tip on focusing the story on what the audience can relate to.
- 9:** A tip on capturing attention by being 'deep at the center of your universe'.
- 10:** A tip to ask 'so what?' several times to gauge audience interest.
- 11:** A tip to select only the 3 to 4 highest-rated topics for the talk, with a checklist.
- 12:** A 'Dilemma #3' about knowing what the audience knows about the subject.

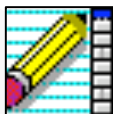
*You can apply these worksheets to your very next presentation...*



### Activity 3-1: Pinpoint your 3 to 4 main “suitcases” of ideas

In the form, identify your **highest-ranking** topics and organize them into no more than **3 to 4** main “suitcases” of ideas. These topics best address your audience’s burning **questions, worries, needs, and goals** that you identified in Part 1.

| Your “Suitcases” of Ideas           | Answers a burning question? | Addresses a big worry or concern? | Resolves a problem or need? | Supports a goal, dream, or aspiration? |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Suitcase #1: <b>High Priority</b> ✓ |                             |                                   |                             |                                        |
| Suitcase #2: <b>High Priority</b> ✓ |                             |                                   |                             |                                        |
| Suitcase #3: <b>High Priority</b> ✓ |                             |                                   |                             |                                        |
| Suitcase #4: <b>High Priority</b> ✓ |                             |                                   |                             |                                        |



### Activity 3-2: Identify your highest-ranking subtopics

In the form, list your **highest-ranking subtopics** underneath each of your 3 to 4 main “suitcases” of ideas. These come from the list you brainstormed in Part 1, which you’ll want to pare down to only the most salient issues that best support your message.

| Your “Suitcases” of Ideas           | Your Highest-Ranking Subtopic Ideas                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Suitcase #1: <b>High Priority</b> ✓ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> <li>▪</li> <li>▪</li> </ul> |
| Suitcase #2: <b>High Priority</b> ✓ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> <li>▪</li> <li>▪</li> </ul> |
| Suitcase #3: <b>High Priority</b> ✓ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> <li>▪</li> <li>▪</li> </ul> |
| Suitcase #4: <b>High Priority</b> ✓ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> <li>▪</li> <li>▪</li> </ul> |



### Activity 3-3: Reflections on Part 3

Type your thoughts into the form below and then save, or print out the page and complete by hand.

Did you find it challenging to reduce your initial lists of topics and subtopics to just 3 to 4 key themes? Explain.

What kinds of topic ideas did you find yourself discarding? Were there any that didn't pass the "so what" test?

**This completes Section 1 of the course on crafting your message**, which explored how to speak meaningfully to your audience's needs, wants, and goals. Once your message is clear, your next step is to bring it to life visually. That's what we'll do in **Section 2**, beginning on the following page!

## SECTION 2: DESIGNING YOUR SLIDES



## Part 4: Reducing Text on Your Slides to Sharpen Your Message

Refer to the Part 4 video in the series

### Section 2: Designing Your Slides

This section of the course covers four vital aspects of making your **visual story** come alive:

- **Part 4** (this chapter) discusses how to reduce the amount of text to boost comprehension.
- **Part 5** focuses on how to select relevant images for your slides.
- **Part 6** covers how to display factual data and supporting details, and
- **Part 7** explores when to use special effects to amplify your message.

**Part 4** kicks off an overview of how to display information on your slides — starting with **minimizing text**.

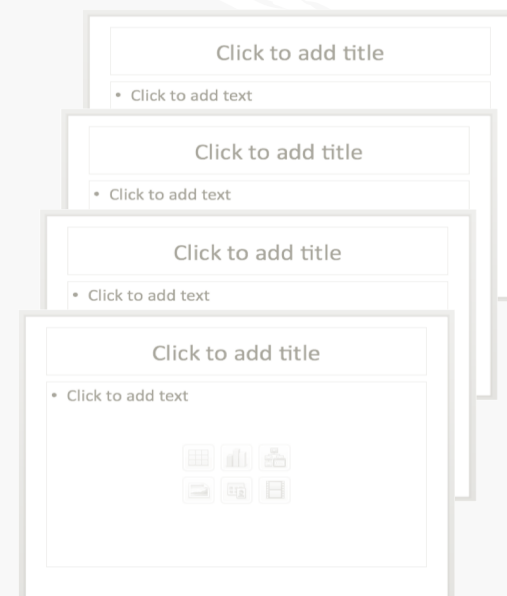
Parts 1, 2, and 3 examined crafting your message, so now you'll shift your attention to the visual aspects.

Each of the four videos in this section highlights a specific **design dilemma** and then offers a variety of tips to help you resolve it.

Mastering even just a few of these techniques will transform your next presentation from forgettable and boring to **memorable and meaningful!**

#### Key Goals for Part 4:

- Finding ways to minimize text on slides
- Displaying just one main idea per slide
- Spreading details across several slides



*On the next page, begin delving into the dilemmas, mistakes, and tips for Part 4...*

### Dilemma #4. Many of Us Learned to Use Mostly Text...

Countless folks learned to use **mainly text** to get their ideas across visually.

It's a common habit that presenters engage in, so why is it even an issue?

**Dense, text-heavy slides** were once considered the norm, but the latest research and audience expectations make them a poor choice today.

Here are some reasons to rethink this practice in your next presentation...

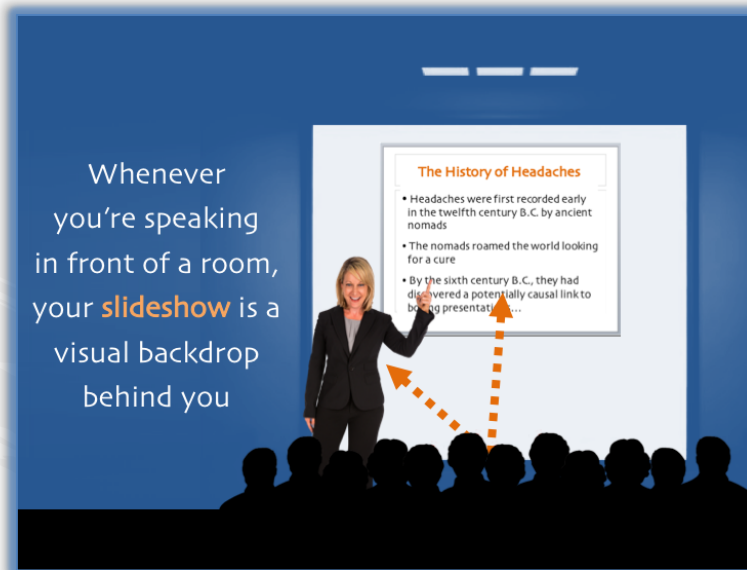
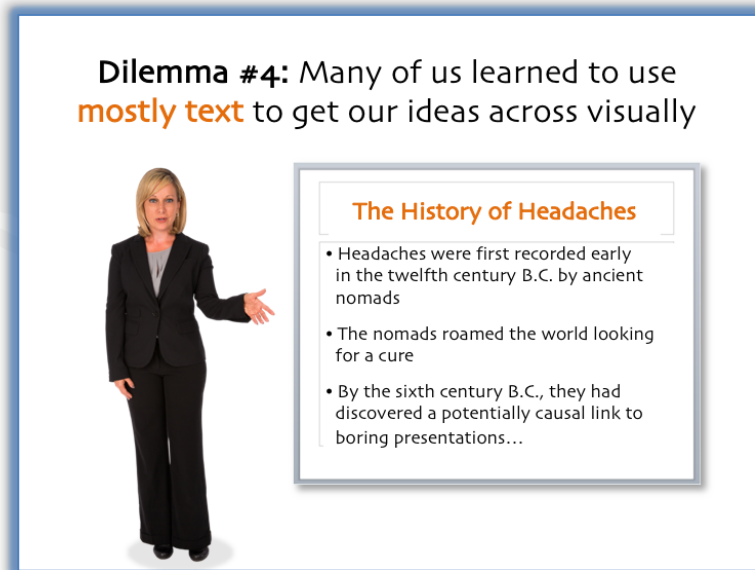
Consider that when you're speaking in front of a room, your slideshow is a **visual backdrop** behind you.

As you kick off your talk, everything's fine as long as you're just talking and gesturing.

But soon after, your **audience's focus splits** between multiple inputs — the slideshow behind you, any handouts they're reading, and the words coming out of your mouth.

Is there really a problem with splitting your listeners' attention in this way?

*Let's find out...*



### Mistake #4: Cramming Your Slides with Dense Text or Lists

Filling your slides with **heavy text** or **lists** can overload your viewers.

This can be true even if you deliver a presentation **online** where people can view your slides at close range.

Presenting overloaded slides is such a common practice that attendees may not be surprised to experience

the same presentation style during the slideshows *you* give.

But in case this habit is one you've found difficult to break, what are you *really* using those traditional, text-heavy slides for?

That's a question you may want to ponder while exploring this chapter.

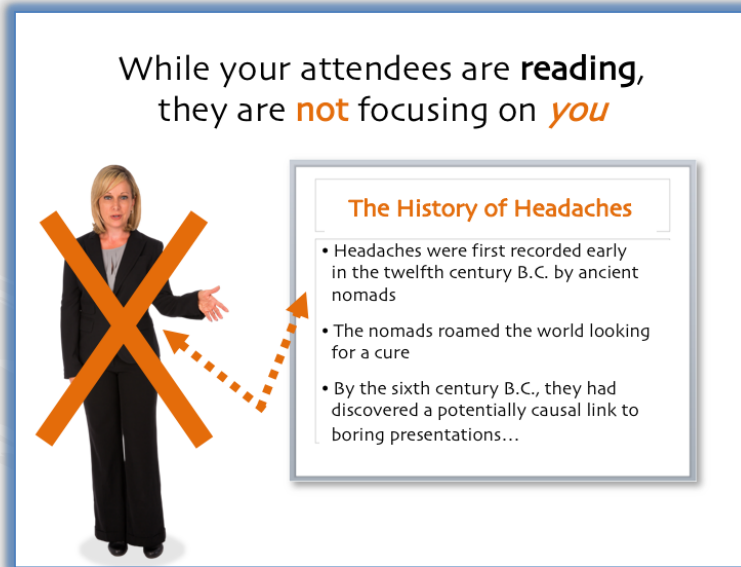
Keep in mind that while attendees are reading that dense information, they're not focusing on *you* and the core points of your message.

The more text you use, the harder it is for people's eyeballs to keep up with your narrative!

*Why is that?*



**Mistake:** Cramming your slides with dense text or lists can overload your viewers



While your attendees are **reading**, they are **not** focusing on *you*

#### The History of Headaches

- Headaches were first recorded early in the twelfth century B.C. by ancient nomads
- The nomads roamed the world looking for a cure
- By the sixth century B.C., they had discovered a potentially causal link to boring presentations...

## Visual and Verbal Channels Are Two Separate Conduits

Our **visual and verbal channels** are two different pathways leading to the brain. Why is that an issue?

Your audience is **simultaneously** watching the speaker and slides, listening to the narration, as well as reading through the handouts.

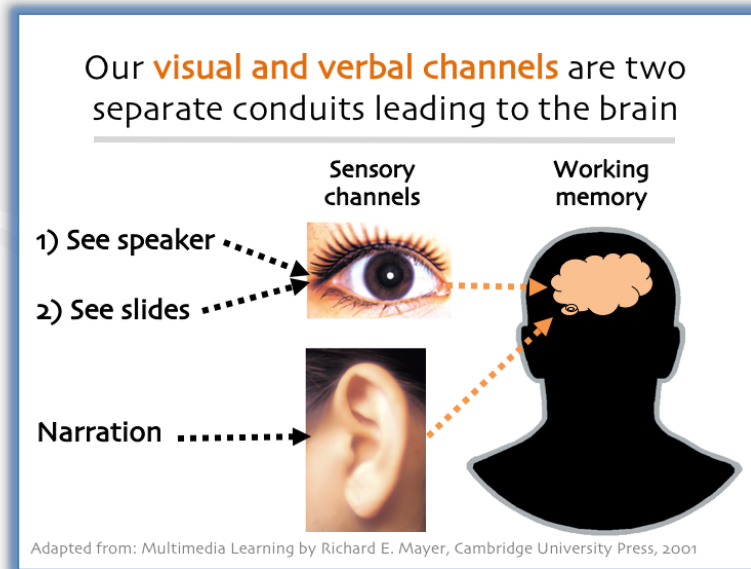
Either **sensory channel** (or both) can very easily become overloaded when attempting to juggle multiple visual and auditory stimuli.

Meanwhile, **working memory** must work valiantly to try to decode and process all of those inputs at once!

As noted in Part 3, our working memories are so tiny, anything more than a few incoming details can cause **total gridlock**.

So how can you prevent or avoid this dilemma?

*Here are some time-tested tips...*



### Tip #4: Support Working Memory by Minimizing Text

Now that you've organized your ideas (in Part 3), the next step is to express them clearly on individual slides.

A key objective should be to **support working memory** by:

- Minimizing text, and
- Displaying one main idea per slide

Why does that matter?

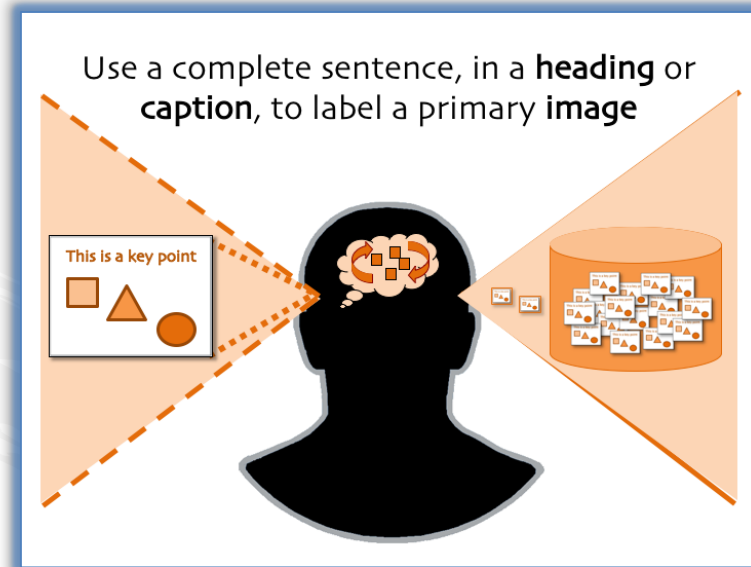
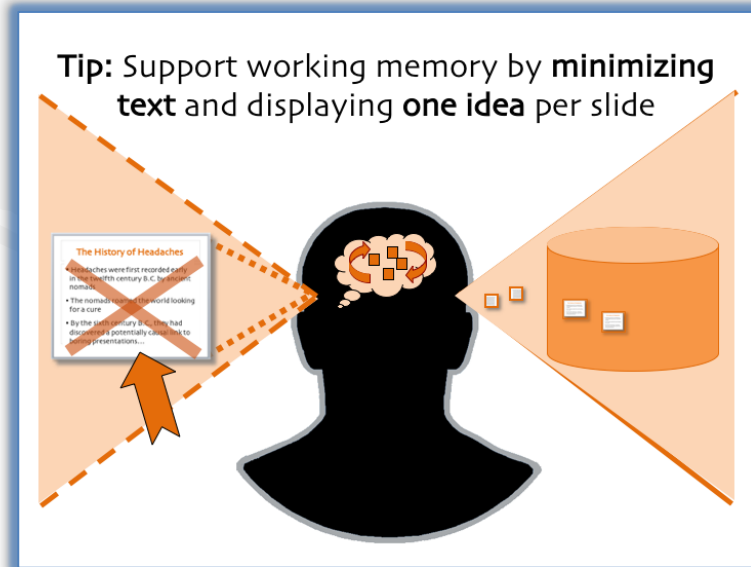
Research shows that people understand narration best when it's **not repeated verbatim as slide text** — when text is kept to a minimum.

Conversely, **redundant slide text** that echoes nearly every word in your narrative can interfere with comprehension.

A best practice is to use a **complete sentence**, in a heading or caption, to label a primary image or a group of images that tell a cohesive story.

But what if text *does* need to play a much larger role in your visual content?

*Here are additional pointers...*



 If You Have Quite a Few Details to Cover...

If you have quite a few text-based details to discuss, you can plan to display them **across several slides**. For example:

- **Emphasize** just one key detail per slide, and
- **Deemphasize** all other details, such as by graying them out.

That way, each slide will be far less cluttered and much easier for your audience to interpret.

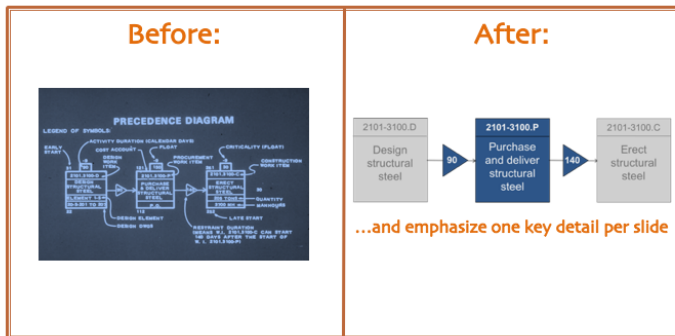
Another best practice is to put all of your heavily **detailed fine points** — the ones that would have appeared on your slides — into your **handouts** instead.

That’s where people can more easily view them at close range.

Using handouts will help your audiences digest and retrieve the details of your content.

Just be sure to use a **font** that’s large and legible enough to let people read without straining.

If you have **quite a few details** to cover, plan to display them across **several slides**



Using **handouts** will help your audiences digest and retrieve the **details** of your content!



## Try Different Ways of Stylizing Your Text

One of the greatest challenges we face when designing our slides is what to do with text formats like **bullet points** and **numbered lists**.

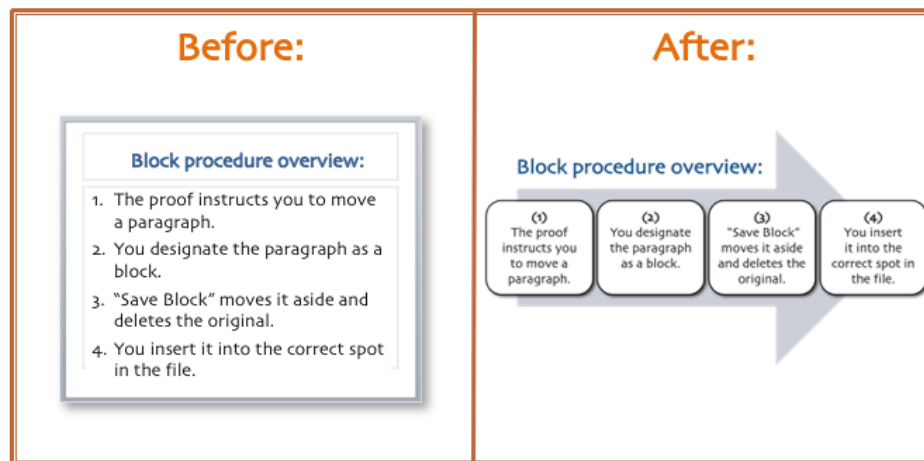
A strong alternative is to transform lists into **image-like** arrangements.

These include the **SmartArt** styles built into PowerPoint, for instance. SmartArt combines **shapes** (circles, rectangles, pyramids, and arrows) with **text** to make the information clearer, as in the example at right.

Although SmartArt usually offers an improvement over unstyled lists, it tends to be **overused** and isn't the most up-to-date styling choice.

The next chapter (Part 5) will show examples of an even more modern list-styling technique.

If you have a **text-based list**, try to **stylize it** so that it's clear and highly legible



*And here's yet another set of tips on minimizing text...*

 **Avoid Using Slides as a Substitute for Speaker Notes**

Have you ever watched a speaker turn her back to the audience and **read directly** from her slides?

Plastering talking points all over your slides is a sure-fire recipe for **audience overload**. It's likely to be a text-heavy display, from which the presenter is tempted to read.

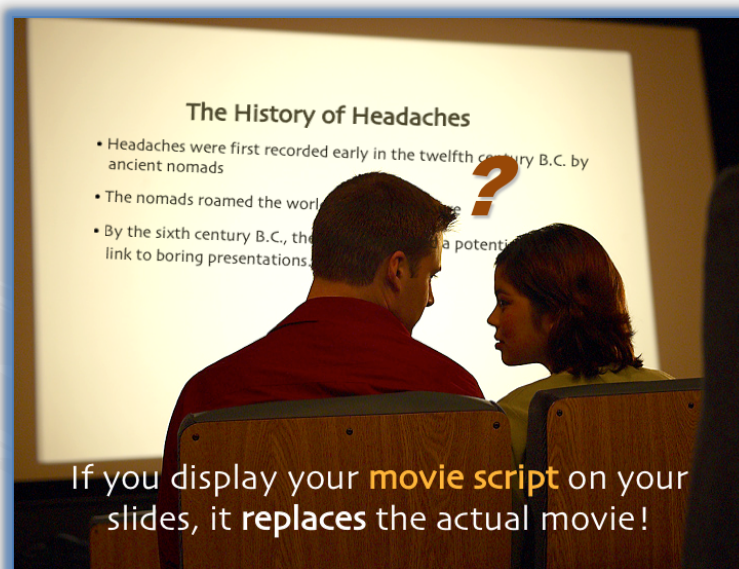
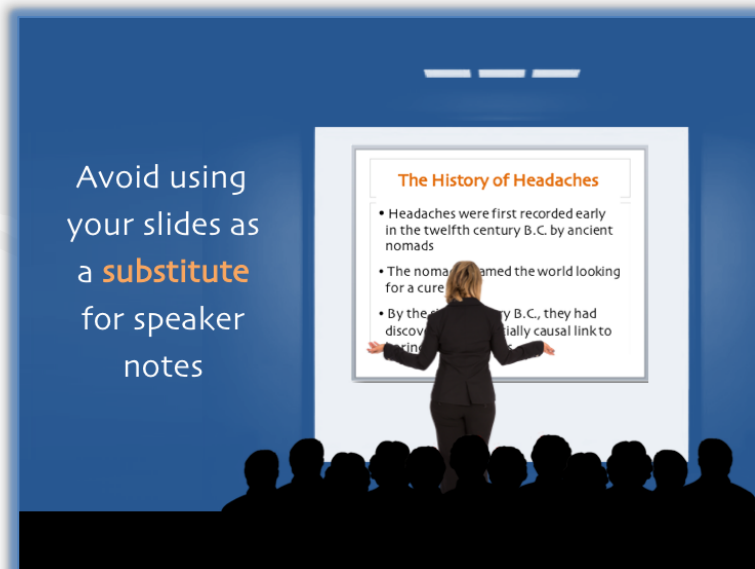
Think of it like inviting friends over to **watch a movie**.

But instead of showing the actual film, you're asking people to **read the script** in its place.

It's sort of like saying, "Here's the script, everyone! Go off and read the plot!"

And since the audience is trying to **both listen and read**, they may end up with a "traffic jam" in working memory.

So, if the pace is fairly fast and the content is relatively detailed, there may be **too many sensory inputs** to attend to at once!



## 💡 Is It Ever OK to Use No Text at All?

As an alternative, you might wonder if you're allowed to **leave all text off of your slides**.

Yes, definitely!

Sometimes no text is the best choice if a dramatic, **self-explanatory image** is the star of the show.

Your spoken narrative can then tell the story that the standalone image helps accentuate!

~~~~~

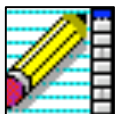
Next, you'll see a **set of worksheets** that will help you visually organize your topics and subtopics, and then map your content to your slides.

Those worksheets pertain to your:

- **Top 3–4 main sections** (your big "suitcases" of content) that will act as dividers, and your...
- **Detail slides** within each of those sections.



A key goal is to keep slide text to a minimum as you experiment with various ways to map your content to your slides!

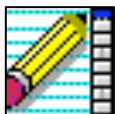


Activity 4-1: Map content to your 3 to 4 main “suitcases” of ideas

Using your list of 3 to 4 main “suitcases” of ideas (which you identified in Part 3), make notes on the **title, text, and image** ideas that will help those **suitcase slides** stand out clearly as the main dividers of your presentation. **Note:** Use only short phrases or rough notes to capture your ideas in this working draft. Just focus on the main ideas each slide should convey.

- **Title** (Tip: Use a complete sentence as the title or caption, which we’ll discuss in more detail in Part 5)
- **Text** (Where needed, identify what form the text might take, such as a subtitle, sidebar, or stylized list)
- **Images** (These are initial ideas that you’ll revisit in Part 5, where you’ll see many pointers on selecting graphics)

Your “Suitcases” of Ideas	Mapping Content to Your Main Suitcase Divider Slides
Suitcase #1: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Suitcase #2: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Suitcase #3: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Suitcase #4: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images



Activity 4-2-1: Map content to your suitcase #1 detail slides

Using your list of 3 to 4 main “suitcases” of ideas from Part 3, make notes on the **title, text, and image** ideas that will display the “meat of your message” — the **core ideas** your audience most needs to understand — on the **detail slides** within each suitcase. **Note:** Use only short phrases or rough notes to capture the main ideas each slide should convey.

- **Title** (Tip: Use a complete sentence as the title or caption, which we’ll discuss in more detail in Part 5)
- **Text** (Where needed, identify what form the text might take, such as a subtitle, sidebar, or stylized list)
- **Images** (These are initial ideas that you’ll revisit in Part 5, where you’ll see many pointers on selecting graphics)

Suitcase #1	Mapping Content to Your Detail Slides
Detail slide 1: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 2: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 3: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 4: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images



Activity 4-2-2: Map content to your suitcase #2 detail slides

Using your list of 3 to 4 main “suitcases” of ideas from Part 3, make notes on the **title, text, and image** ideas that will display the “meat of your message” — the **core ideas** your audience most needs to understand — on the **detail slides** within each suitcase. **Note:** Use only short phrases or rough notes to capture the main ideas each slide should convey.

- **Title** (Tip: Use a complete sentence as the title or caption, which we’ll discuss in more detail in Part 5)
- **Text** (Where needed, identify what form the text might take, such as a subtitle, sidebar, or stylized list)
- **Images** (These are initial ideas that you’ll revisit in Part 5, where you’ll see many pointers on selecting graphics)

Suitcase #2	Mapping Content to Your Detail Slides
Detail slide 1: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 2: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 3: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 4: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images



Activity 4-2-3: Map content to your suitcase #3 detail slides

Using your list of 3 to 4 main “suitcases” of ideas from Part 3, make notes on the **title, text, and image** ideas that will display the “meat of your message” — the **core ideas** your audience most needs to understand — on the **detail slides** within each suitcase. **Note:** Use only short phrases or rough notes to capture the main ideas each slide should convey.

- **Title** (Tip: Use a complete sentence as the title or caption, which we’ll discuss in more detail in Part 5)
- **Text** (Where needed, identify what form the text might take, such as a subtitle, sidebar, or stylized list)
- **Images** (These are initial ideas that you’ll revisit in Part 5, where you’ll see many pointers on selecting graphics)

Suitcase #3	Mapping Content to Your Detail Slides
Detail slide 1: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 2: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 3: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 4: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images

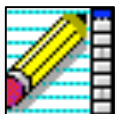


Activity 4-2-4: Map content to your suitcase #4 detail slides

Using your list of 3 to 4 main “suitcases” of ideas from Part 3, make notes on the **title, text, and image** ideas that will display the “meat of your message” — the **core ideas** your audience most needs to understand — on the **detail slides** within each suitcase. **Note:** Use only short phrases or rough notes to capture the main ideas each slide should convey.

- **Title** (Tip: Use a complete sentence as the title or caption, which we’ll discuss in more detail in Part 5)
- **Text** (Where needed, identify what form the text might take, such as a subtitle, sidebar, or stylized list)
- **Images** (These are initial ideas that you’ll revisit in Part 5, where you’ll see many pointers on selecting graphics)

Suitcase #4	Mapping Content to Your Detail Slides
Detail slide 1: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 2: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 3: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images
Detail slide 4: High Priority ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title ▪ Text ▪ Images



Activity 4-3: Reflections on Part 4

Type your thoughts into the form below and then save, or print out the page and complete by hand.

Did you gain any useful insights as you began mapping content to your suitcase divider and detail slides? Explain.

Did you find it helpful to pre-structure your story, without opening your slide-design software first? Explain.

When you've finished, proceed to Part 5 to delve into tips and techniques for illustrating your slides!

Part 5: Selecting Relevant Graphics to Support Your Narrative

Refer to the Part 5 video in the series

Part 5 explains how to **use images meaningfully** to grab and sustain your audience's attention.

Selecting graphics is a challenging task for many of us who are *not* professional graphic designers!

Yet relevant images augment your story and magnify its impact. Other images can weaken your narrative and even turn off your audience.

The practical tips you'll receive next will help you use images like a pro!

Key Goals for Part 5:

- Combining text with relevant graphics
- Choosing a harmonious "visual vocabulary"
- Redesigning lists to increase visual interest



Dilemma #5. We Often Aren't Sure How to Use Graphics...

Many of us are intimidated by visuals — and believe that only an artist can design a good slideshow. But nothing could be further from the truth!

Here's the secret: Anyone can learn to use images effectively. There are many good sources of eye-catching, royalty-free graphics to choose from online!

As mentioned earlier in the course, slide software is merely an **empty canvas** on which to paint anything you wish. You just have to **imagine what to paint** — and why!

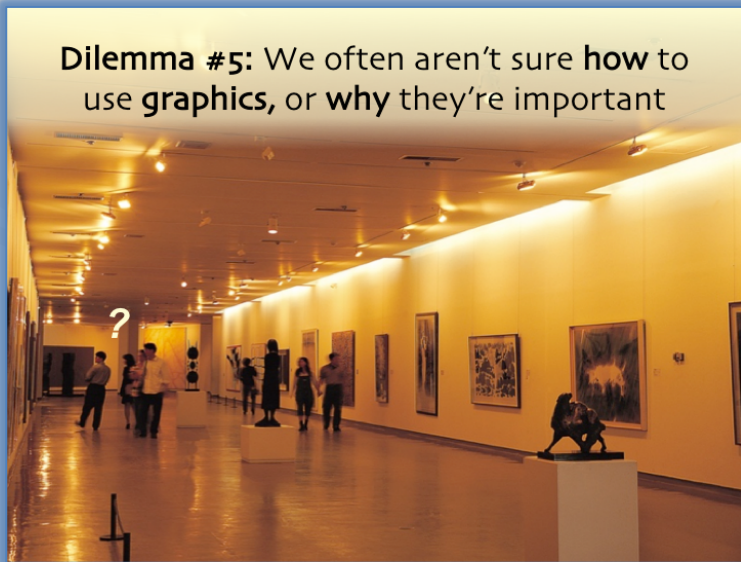
Yet for people who work with words or numbers all day, choosing images can feel like a daunting proposition.

Many folks abandon their creativity and revert to old, outdated habits when they start on a presentation.

That's because the slide software itself nudges us to **enter text, text, and more text**. But is that always an undesirable thing?

Let's find out...

Dilemma #5: We often aren't sure **how** to use **graphics**, or **why** they're important



Slide software is merely an **empty canvas** on which to paint anything we wish. We just have to imagine **what to paint** — and why!



Mistake #5. Failure to Use Relevant Images

If you sidestep finding **relevant images** to support your message, it can hinder people’s ability to anchor your ideas.

Note that **not every picture is relevant**. The right ones clarify your meaning and amplify your message. The wrong ones can interfere with and detract from it.

But what exactly is a relevant image?

Relevant images can be **symbolic** or **factual**, and could take a variety of forms. (We’ll probe this further.)

Relevance indicates that as long as your visuals relate to your story, an audience can make the connection.

In contrast, **non-relevant images** include slide decorations, big logos

and patterns, and puzzling, hypnotic backgrounds.

Instead of amplifying your message, they **create visual noise**, which your audience must try to tune out.

So how difficult is it to address this challenge?

Let’s dive deeper...

Relevant images can be either **symbolic** or **factual**, and could take a variety of forms



Non-relevant images include slide decorations, big logos and patterns, and busy backgrounds



Tip #5. Let Relevant Graphics Do the Visual “Heavy Lifting”

Use **relevant images**, either **factual** or **symbolic**, to infuse your story with a highly memorable visual impact.

These aren’t decorations, but graphics that convey meaning and relate closely to your message.

What’s the **difference** between **factual** and **symbolic** images?

Factual images display facts or data, such as in tables, diagrams, charts, graphs, and maps.

Examples (image at right) include:

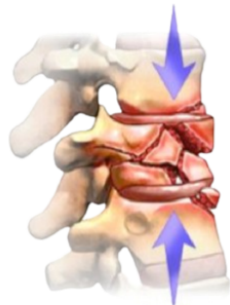
- a diagram of the spine
- a graph that shows sales data
- an illustration of a machine, and
- a map that pinpoints key regions

It’s always ideal to use high-quality **photos and illustrations** instead of relying on clip art.

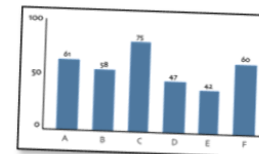
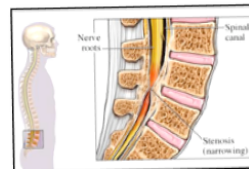
Alternatively, some images could be used as **dramatic backdrops** for important quotes, for example, to yield a more professional effect.

*Now let’s look at **symbolic** images...*

Tip: Let **relevant graphics**, either **factual** or **symbolic**, do the visual “heavy lifting”



Factual images display **facts or data**, such as in tables, diagrams, charts, graphs, and maps



Symbolic Images Convey Realistic or Abstract Concepts

In contrast to factual images, **symbolic** images can convey **realistic** or **abstract** concepts simply and powerfully, as they embody deeper meanings or ideas.

Symbolic images include **objects**, like a lightbulb, magnifier, or compass. These often represent ideas such as “insight,” “discovery,” and “a new direction.”

Symbolic images also can suggest **metaphors, expressions, or slogans**, which are often used to tell a story.

Examples (image at right) include:

- “hitting a nail on the head”
- “running out of time” or
- “on the hook to deliver”

Why are symbolic images so useful for illustrating your message?

You may have heard that our **brains interpret symbols quite easily**. This means the most effective images are very basic and straightforward.

Here are additional reasons why...

Symbolic images can convey realistic or abstract concepts simply and powerfully



“Insight”

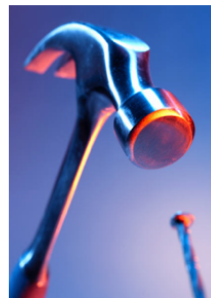


“Discovery”



“Direction”

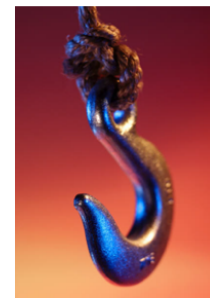
Symbolic images can also communicate **metaphors, expressions, or slogans**



“Hitting a nail on the head”



“Running out of time”



“On the hook to deliver”

Our Brains Excel at Interpreting Patterns, Pictures, and Symbols

The human brain is especially adept at **encoding and decoding** patterns, pictures, and symbols.

Not only do simple graphics help us decipher meaning in the moment, but they also help us **process, store, and recall** that information for use at a later date.

This means that the more simply and cleanly you can package your visual message, the more readily attendees will be able to absorb it.

That's what makes uncomplicated images so powerful. They tend to make your message **easy to grasp and hard to forget!**

We'll explore other key pieces of the puzzle on the following pages.

Our brains are highly adept at encoding and decoding **patterns, pictures, and symbols**



Next, you'll see even more graphic design tips...

 Choose a Harmonious “Visual Vocabulary”

Plan on selecting a balanced “visual vocabulary” consisting of **compatible images, colors, and fonts** to produce pleasing, attention-grabbing slides.

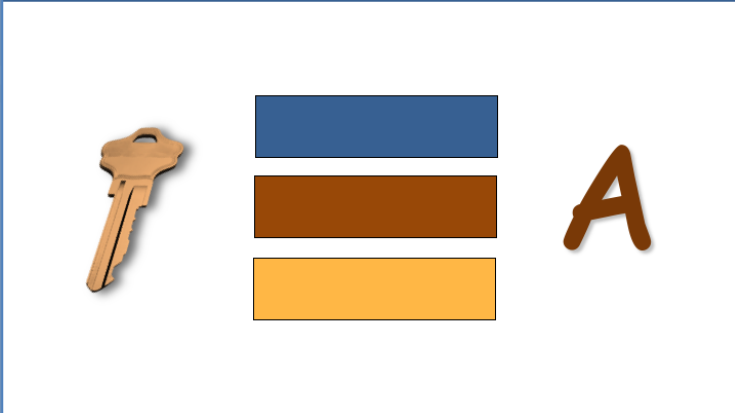
Think of your slides as an outfit where all of the elements should **harmonize** instead of **clashing**. Several websites give advice on how to combine colors.

But what if you’re working with a **client or company that has rules** for using fonts or color combinations? Be sure to follow rules carefully by building your palette around them. By carefully limiting your menu of options, you’ll be visually consistent and avoid jarring combinations.


Further, **text and relevant graphics** together can boost understanding and make your ideas more “sticky.”

Keep in mind that the information you design should be “**high-impact**” to engage attention, but also “**low-bandwidth**” to minimize the human effort required to process it!

Choose a harmonious “visual vocabulary” of compatible **images, colors, and fonts**



Use **text and relevant graphics** together to boost understanding



 Present Only One Main Idea Per Slide

Displaying **one main idea** per slide and using a complete sentence provides a **memorable “hook”** for your images.

This combination makes a presentation more legible, especially from a distance. Think of each slide like a **freeway sign**, which your audience may have only a few seconds to scan.

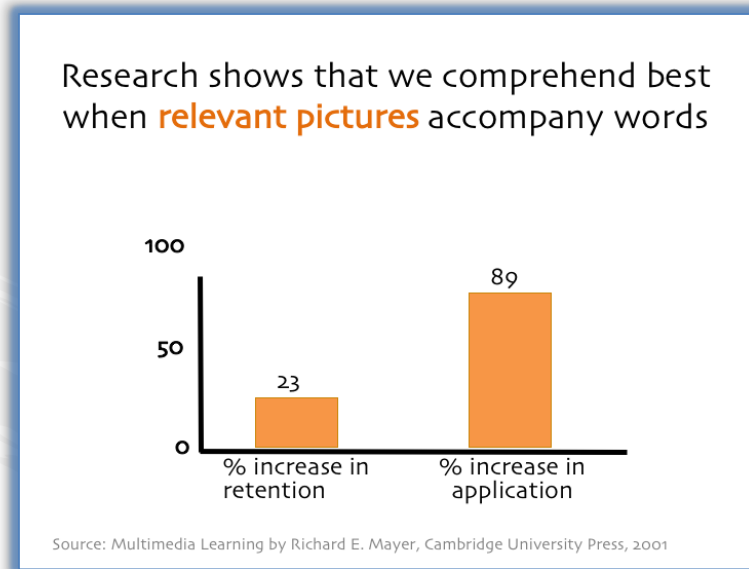
Research shows that we absorb information best when **relevant pictures accompany words**.

Pairing a chart with a headline, or a photo with a caption, cements the meaning.

It’s an effective way to enhance the visual power of symbols!

Just remember that the **easier** your message is to interpret and process, the more readily people will:

- **Retain** the information
- **Retrieve** from it memory under the right circumstances, and then
- **Apply** it correctly.



 Use Themes, Metaphors, Symbols, Colors, & Fonts Consistently

Integrating visual elements predictably will unify your presentation and harness the **power of consistency** across all slides.

For example, using harmonious primary and secondary **colors**, a small number of **fonts**, and relevant **symbols** throughout will make your content appear far more organized and visually appealing.

Themes and metaphors offer ways to convey aspirations or challenges that your audience might be facing.

Examples of metaphors in a navigation theme include “rough waters,” “reset compass,” & “smooth sailing.”

Themes are also ideal for designing **multipart graphic panels** that serve

as dividers for your big suitcases of content. They create continuity for key sections and high-level topics.

At the start of your talk, multipart panels give people an **overview** by “telling them what you’re going to tell them.” At the end, they **recap** by revisiting “what you’ve told them.”

You can use **multipart graphic panels** to provide continuity for your main sections

Part 1: Rough waters Part 2: Reset compass Part 3: Smooth sailing



This multipart graphic panel highlights a **health-related** theme

Topic 1: Diet Topic 2: Exercise Topic 3: Relaxation



 **And Finally, Experiment with Rethinking Bullet Point Lists**

Try various ways of formatting **text-based lists** to boost visual interest.

A more modern style involves using a **pictographic approach**:

- **Icons** to replace bullet points
- **A horizontal layout** rather than a vertical one, which viewers can scan left to right.

Doable changes like these can create a polished effect that your audience should find more appealing!






~~~~~

**Worksheets for Activities 5.1– 5.3** will help you expand your visual vocabulary by identifying your:

- **Themes**
- **Metaphors**
- **Symbols**
- **Colors**
- **Fonts**

**Experiment with rethinking bullet point lists to increase visual interest**

**Teen volunteerism is on the rise**

|                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <br>Program overview | <br>Participation has increased steadily since 2018 | <br>Community partnerships make teen engagement possible | <br>Recognition and awards boost teen participation | <br>Seeking new opportunities will expand involvement |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

*These worksheets begin on the very next page...*



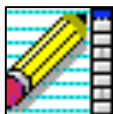
### Activity 5.1: Which THEMES and METAPHORS can best frame your story?

Type into the form below or print and complete by hand. **Themes** help you create a consistent look and feel throughout your slides that's visually aligned with your content. **Metaphors** convey specific goals or challenges that your message will address.

**Themes:** Is there an overarching area of concentration for your talk? For example, will your presentation focus on education, marketing, business, science, healthcare, nonprofits, technology solutions, or something else? (describe)

**Metaphors:** Choose the metaphor that most clearly explains your core idea and that your audience can immediately understand and remember. Examples include:

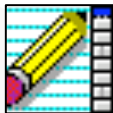
- Inspirational achievement (e.g., a mountain climbing metaphor) – describe:
- Charting a new direction (e.g., an exploration or navigation metaphor) – describe:
- Searching for a new solution (e.g., a buried treasure metaphor) – describe:
- Beating the competition (e.g., a sports metaphor) – describe:
- Solving a mystery (e.g., a detective story metaphor) – describe:
- Other – describe:



### Activity 5.2: Which kinds of **SYMBOLS** would support your message effectively?

Type into the form below or print and complete by hand. Which kinds of **symbols** (including **icons**) might best convey your key **ideas, expressions, or slogans**? See a list of sample categories below, or describe any other ideas you may have.

- Research and investigation (e.g., magnifying glass, question mark, microscope) – describe:
  
- Insight and inspiration (e.g., key, light bulb, exclamation point) – describe:
  
- Direction setting (e.g., map, compass, binoculars, telescope) – describe:
  
- Safety and security (e.g., lock, safe, lifesaver, safety pin) – describe:
  
- Funding, resources, time (e.g., money, treasure chest, clock, stopwatch, hour glass) – describe:
  
- Solutions (e.g., lab beakers, prescription pad) – describe:
  
- Other – describe:



### Activity 5.3: Which COLORS and FONTS blend with your visual vocabulary?

Next, translate your visual vocabulary decisions into **color** and **font** choices that reinforce the tone, mood, and visual elements you've already defined. **Note:** If your **style guide** requires specific **colors** and **fonts**, make note of those below.

**Colors:** Which color palette best supports your presentation? Sites like **Colors**, **Adobe Color**, **Paletton**, and **Khroma** help you find compatible colors using color theory and other factors. Or follow your existing style guide if required.

#### *PRIMARY COLORS:*

- Primary color 1 – HEX or RGB value:
- Primary color 2 – HEX or RGB value:

#### *ACCENT COLORS:*

- Accent color 1 – HEX or RGB value:
- Accent color 2 – HEX or RGB value:

**Typography:** Which fonts best represent the level of formality or casualness you need? Ideal fonts display clearly and crisply from across a room (as well as close range), usually at least 24 points. Or, follow your existing style guide.

#### *ONLINE OR PRESENTATION FONTS:*

- Primary headline font – specify:
- Alternate headline font – specify:
- Primary body text font – specify:
- Alternate body text font – specify:

#### *PRINT FONTS:*

- Primary headline font – specify:
- Alternative headline font – specify:
- Primary body text font – specify:
- Alternative body text font – specify:



### Activity 5-4: Reflections on Part 5

Type your thoughts into the form below and then save it, or print out the page and complete by hand.

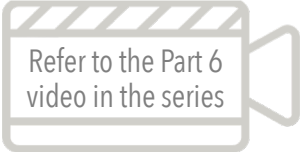
Will you be using an existing style guide to select colors and fonts? If so, does it constrain your options? Explain.

If you visited one of the color selection sites (e.g., Colors, Adobe Color, Paletton, or Khroma), did it help? Explain.

**When you've finished, proceed to Part 6** on how to remove unnecessary details from literal and factual images!



## Part 6: Simplifying Complex Images to Increase Understanding



Part 6 focuses on **simplifying any data-rich graphics** that you might be using in your presentation.

These include the **literal and factual information** shown in graphs, charts, diagrams, tables, and maps.

We'll look at ways to transform those kinds of visuals so they'll be instantly clear to your audience — either from across a room or at close range.

So, let's jump into that challenge!



### Key Goals for Part 6:

- Removing prominent logos and slide decorations
- Omitting excessive or gratuitous details in images
- Decluttering graphs, charts, diagrams, tables, maps
- Making text "image-like" if it's the main subject

## Dilemma #6. We Often Include Far Too Much Detail on Our Slides

We're frequently tempted to shove way **too many details** into our slide content. Have you ever noticed how much data people try to cram into **factual images**? That's partly the fault of **tools like Excel** that pack every last fine point into our number-based graphics.

We can't expect people to decipher those graphics simply by squinting at the screen!

Recall that your audience's focus is often **split** between multiple inputs. Those include the content on your **slides**, any **handouts** they're reading,

and the **words** coming out of your mouth.

Dividing people's attention in this way can quickly cause **audience overload**.

This problem is compounded by the presence of **visual noise...**



## Mistake #6. Displaying Elaborate Detail Decreases Understanding

Excessive detail and other distractions create **visual noise**. What is that, and why should you want to avoid it?

As we've seen, **extraneous images** like prominent logos and slide decorations can lead to confusion and eye strain for attendees.

Each competing visual element adds

more distraction, as well as hampers your audience's ability to make sense of **factual details** you're presenting.

This means your audience could be faced with two types of challenges:

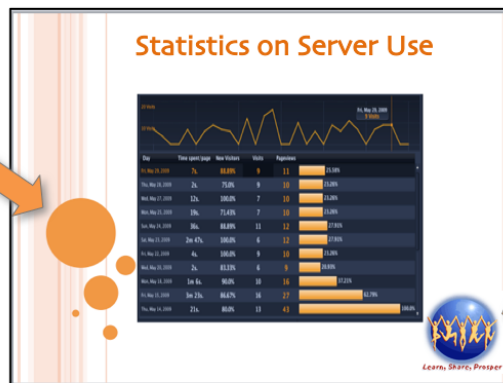
- **hypnotic eye candy** (or other non-relevant images), and
- **overly busy factual graphics**

That's a key reason why you'd want to avoid displaying elaborate detail in your fact-based graphics, since it can decrease retention and recall.

You may wonder **what goes through the minds** of people who glaze over, tune out, or give up on your visuals.

*Let's find out...*

For example, prominent **logos** and slide **decorations** add even **more** distraction!



**Mistake:** Displaying **elaborate detail** in fact-based images tends to **decrease retention and recall**

## If You Could Hear What Goes on the Minds of Attendees...

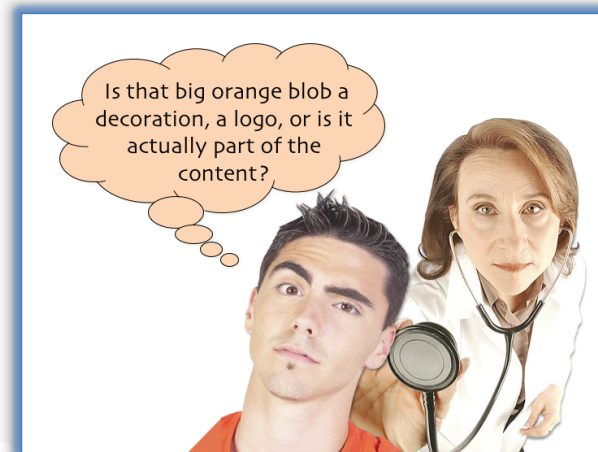
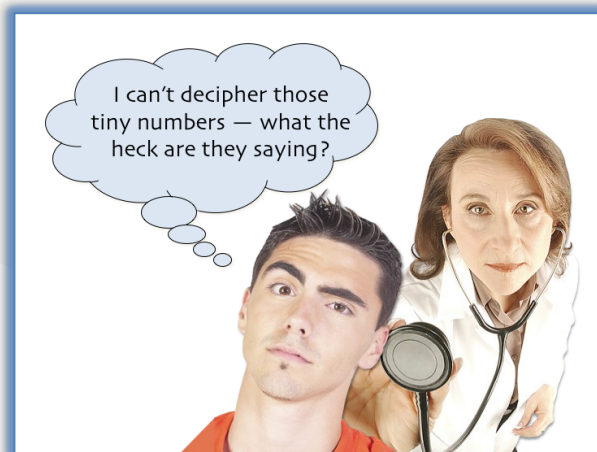
If you were able to listen to the inner conversations going on in people's heads, you might hear chatter like this:

"I can't decipher those tiny numbers — what the heck are they saying?"

All those patterns, colors, & dizzying details are giving me a headache!"

"Is that big orange blob a decoration, a logo, or is it part of the content?"

The moment those silent monologues kick in, your message has already left the stage!



*So, how do you achieve "less is more" when designing your slides?*

## Tip #6: Use a Clean “Billboard” Approach to Design

What does a clean “billboard” approach refer to?

It means starting with the fundamentals by wiping the slate clean!

If you think of each slide as a **freeway sign** that your audience may have only a few moments to scan, it will give you insight into just how short-lived that opportunity is.

As explained in **Part 5**, if attendees can make sense of your slides at a glance, you’ve achieved the desired result.

So, with regard to **simplifying complex images**, this analogy illustrates another key reason to strip off decorative slide frills, as well as declutter charts, graphs, diagrams, tables, and maps.

Certain details may be appropriate to put into your **handouts**, which we’ll briefly cover again in this chapter.



## Let's Look at a Few Examples of Simplifying Graphics

It's often quite tempting to **embellish charts** with effects like 3-D rotations, bevels, patterns, textures, background designs, and even garish colors — just because we can.

Flashy design elements like these are popular, which is why people use them. But they can leave viewers glazed over.

That's why **omitting** any 3-D effects, shadows, and patterns makes your fact-based images far more readable. This even includes stripping off the **gridlines** in a bar chart!

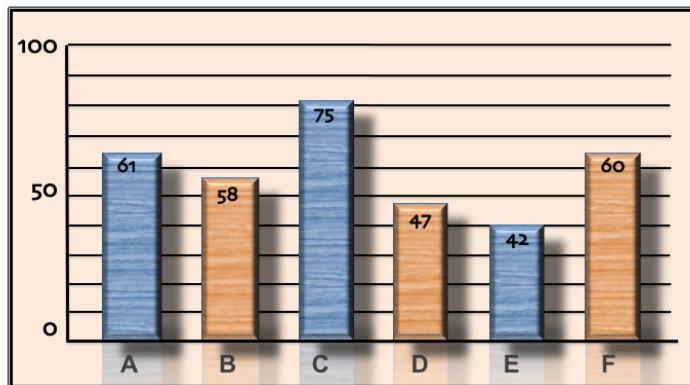
In the images below, the one at right removes those distracting features, which makes it much clearer.

You may recall that unlike symbolic images, **data-filled graphics** provide the literal or factual details needed to support your message.

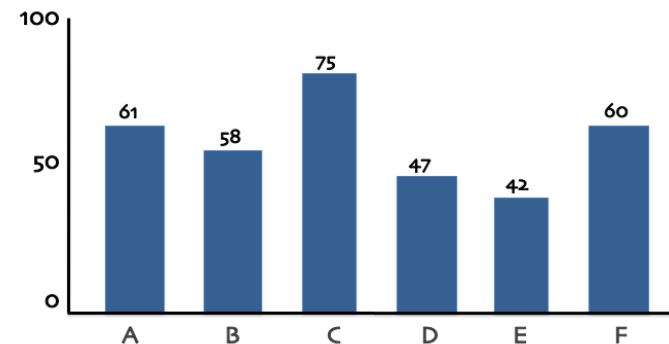
These images embody the “meat” of your talk, which is why you'll want to make them as clear as possible.

*Here are some additional tips...*

For instance, it's very tempting to **embellish charts** — just because we *can*...



Yet **omitting** any 3D effects, shadows, and patterns makes the chart far more readable!



 Research Shows That to Boost Understanding, Less Is More

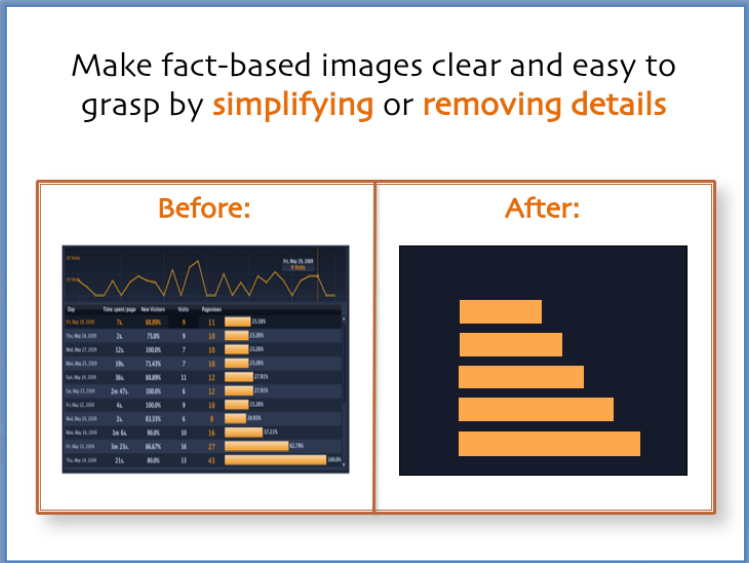
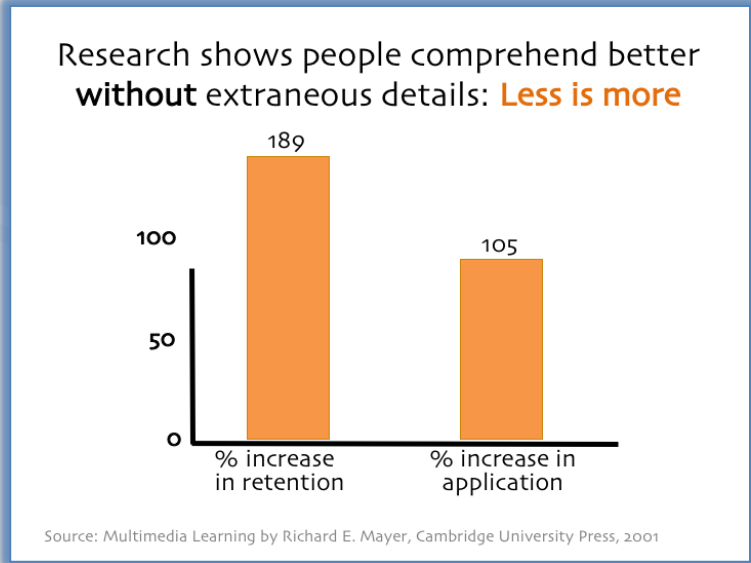
In the chart below summarizing related research findings, you'll see a dramatic increase in people's ability to retain and apply ideas **after extraneous details are removed**.

This means that simplifying slides, and especially fact-based images, is a highly effective way to boost understanding.

As discussed on the previous pages, minimizing or removing details will help you boil your content down to the **barebones view** of whatever it is you are presenting.

Then you can put all the fine points, big logos, and prominent branding in your **handouts** instead of your slides.

As explained in **Part 4**, **handouts** help people further digest the key points of your content, which they can pore over later, at close range. In this way, you can lessen that all-too-common problem of attendees **splitting their attention** during a fast-moving presentation.



 Next, Break up Dense Tables and Spreadsheets

Have you ever seen slideshows in which presenters have plopped indecipherable **tables or spreadsheets** onto their slides? Visuals like the example at left contain a level of detail that your audience can't easily interpret at a distance or close up. Staring nonstop at **very dense fine print** can result in a cognitive meltdown!

Instead, you can display key points **across multiple slides**. You can also convert the text to graphic elements to add eye-catching emphasis.

In this way, you can use each slide in the series to expose a different piece of the puzzle, and thereby show just **one feature at a time**.

The example at right illustrates a **"progressive disclosure"** technique.

This involves breaking content into basic building blocks and presenting each block separately.

It's a method of revealing complex topics **incrementally**, which makes interpreting them much easier.

Break up dense **tables** and **spreadsheets** that your audience can't easily read

| Domain-specific skills                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Cognitive processes                                                                                                                                                                       | High-level methods                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>PROCEDURES</b><br>• Previously learned labels, facts, organized knowledge<br>• Previously learned rules<br>• Previously learned schemata<br>• Encoding strategies                                                                  | • Previously learned labels, facts, organized knowledge<br>• Previously learned rules<br>• Previously learned schemata<br>• Encoding strategies                                           | • Mastery of prerequisite concepts, facts, discriminations, rules, etc.<br>• Mastery of prerequisite rules (for decomposed procedures)<br>• Identification of procedural steps<br>• Descriptions of each step<br>• Demonstrations or verbal instructions with pictures<br>• Practice performing each step<br>• Repeated practice of total skill with informative feedback                                                         |
| <b>PRINCIPLES</b><br>1. Rules*<br>• Previously learned labels, facts, organized knowledge<br>• Previously learned schemata<br>• Encoding strategies                                                                                   | • Previously learned labels, facts, organized knowledge<br>• Previously learned rules<br>• Previously learned schemata<br>• Encoding strategies                                           | • Mastery of prerequisite concepts, facts, discriminations, etc.<br>• Varied examples & non-examples<br>• Give situations where rule is used<br>• Use analogies, authentic context, simulations, and recall cues<br>• Demonstrate application of rule<br>• Practice using rule; give feedback                                                                                                                                     |
| 2. Higher-order rules* (problem solving)<br>• Previously learned prerequisite rules<br>• Use of automation<br>• Recall of schemata<br>• Cognitive strategy use<br>• Use of appropriate information "sets"<br>• Minimal cognitive load | • Previously learned prerequisite rules<br>• Use of automation<br>• Recall of schemata<br>• Cognitive strategy use<br>• Use of appropriate information "sets"<br>• Minimal cognitive load | • Mastery of prerequisite concepts, facts, discriminations, etc.<br>• Varied previously learned rules<br>• Use of worked examples & rules<br>• Use of similar examples<br>• Use of authentic context case study<br>• Demonstrate worked examples<br>• Use of guided practice problems<br>• Emphasis on recall cues<br>• Reminder of previous strategies<br>• Integrate sources of information<br>• Practice to achieve automation |

Instead, **display key points** across several slides, and convert **text to graphic elements**

Facts

Concepts

**Procedures**

Processes

Principles

**Procedure Example:**

Example of a Step-by-Step Procedure

**How to Teach Your Dog to Sit**

**Step 1:** Stand in front of your dog.

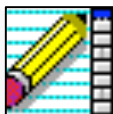
**Step 2:** Hold a treat near your dog's nose.

**Step 3:** Slowly move the treat over your dog's head, toward his or her tail.

**Step 4:** Say your dog's name, and say, "Sit."

⋮





### Activity 6-1: What kinds of fact-based images will you be using?

Type into the form below or print and complete by hand. List the kinds of **fact-based graphics** that you'll need to either produce or locate to support your message. If they're particularly dense or complex, consider ways of simplifying them.

**Graphs** (list the types and describe how you can simplify them):

**Charts** (list the types and describe how you can simplify them):

**Tables** (list the types and describe how you can simplify them):

**Diagrams** (list the types and describe how you can simplify them):

**Maps** (list the types and describe how you can simplify them):



### Activity 6-2: Reflections on Part 6

Type your thoughts into the form below and then save it, or print out the page and complete by hand.

Did the process of identifying any fact-based graphics help you crystallize your design ideas? Explain.

Were you able to visualize ways to simplify any complex graphics so they'll be clearer to your audience? Explain.

**When you've finished, proceed to Part 7** to tackle the **final dilemma**, the pros and cons of using **special effects** in your presentations!

## Part 7: Choosing Special Effects Wisely to Amplify Your Message

Refer to the Part 7 video in the series

Part 7, the final segment of this video series, explores attention-grabbing effects such as **sounds, videos, animations,** and showy **slide transitions.**

Their effectiveness depends on the **purpose** you want them to serve.

Are they meant to **accentuate** your content in a meaningful way, or simply add **excitement** to keep people awake?

For instance, at right is a freeze frame of a music video intended to engage viewers' interest.

But is it primarily designed to spark **curiosity**, or is it actually part of the **content**?

That all depends on the **context** in which you're using it!



### Key Goals for Part 7:

- Selecting relevant sounds, motion, and movement
- Avoiding distracting, gratuitous, and jarring effects
- Emphasizing the "steak" more than the "sizzle"

*Find out what matters most in your own presentations...*

## Dilemma #7. It's Tempting to Use Special Effects to Spice Things Up...

There's no question that effects that include **sounds, video, or animation** can make many presentations more captivating.

**Multimedia** elements may very well support your message in ways that text and images alone can't achieve.

For example, **videos** are very useful (and often vital) for demonstrating procedures and processes. They can illustrate the "**how-to**" sequence for performing a series of steps.

And **animations** show how things move or change under various real-world or simulated conditions. You could also use **animated characters** to narrate your demonstration in a semi-realistic fashion.

Yet some speakers rely heavily on **overstimulating** the senses to keep the audience engaged.



*So, where should you draw the line?*

## Mistake #7: Excessive Use of Special Effects Can Overwhelm Attention

**Extravagant** use of special effects can overload or divert people’s attention.

Whether you’re producing a basic slide-show or a full-scale video course, what are examples of **multimedia overkill**?

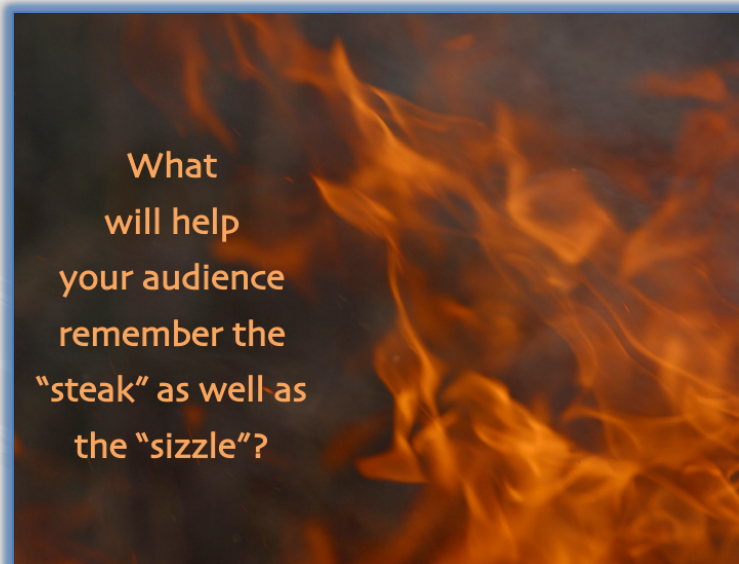
- Loud, gratuitous **sound effects** that are unrelated to your story.

- Background **music** that drowns out your narrative.
- Flashy, repetitive **animations** that distract from your message.
- Big, showy **motion graphics** that bounce around the screen, and
- Dizzying slide **transitions**.

So, what will help your audience remember the **“steak”** as well as the **“sizzle”**? Keep in mind that:

- **A little “sizzle”** highlights what you want people to remember.
- **Too much “sizzle,”** and people might miss the **“steak.”**

**Mistake:** Excessive use of **special effects** can overwhelm or divert attention



### Tip #7: Choose Special Effects Carefully to Highlight Your Story

After simplifying your slides in Part 6, choose special effects to **highlight**, not distract from, your message.

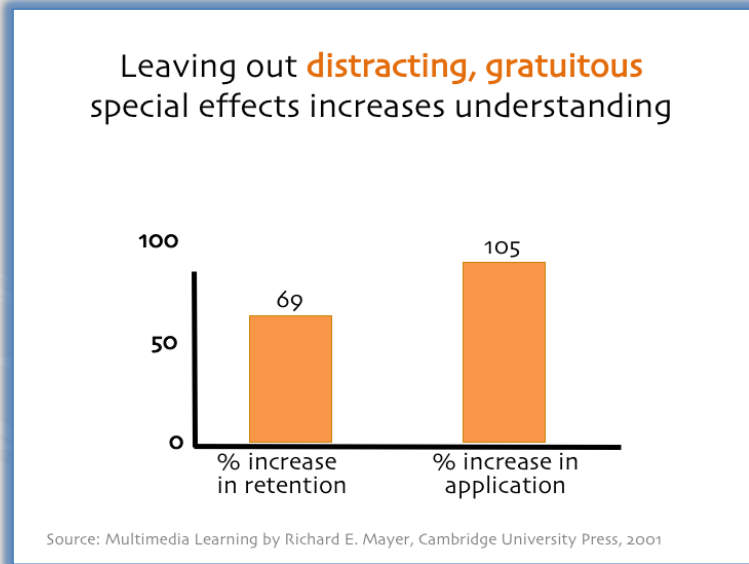
For example, you'll want those effects to **complement** your narrative, evoke emotion, enhance clarity, and help keep your audience engaged without causing overload.

For some stories, such as those that feature real-life scenarios or events, **overly stylized effects could detract** from their perceived authenticity.

In those situations, **subtle effects** like slow camera movements or lighting adjustments may be more successful than over-the-top attention-getters.

**Research shows** that leaving out any annoying, superfluous special effects increases understanding.

As summarized in the data shown below, you could see a significant improvement in your audience's ability to retain and apply your ideas!



## The Key Is to Use Just Enough Sparkle...

The aim is to use **only relevant visual and audio effects** to frame your core concepts.

This calls for just the right amount of emphasis to convey your message in a clear and compelling way without becoming a distraction.

If you use these guidelines sensibly, your audiences will remain engaged and able to absorb your key points!

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The **final set of worksheets** will help you locate the types of multimedia effects (if any) that best accentuate your story. They might include:

- **Videos and animations**, such as depicting real-life scenarios
- **Applicable sound effects**, but not too loud or tediously repetitive
- **Subtle background music**, and
- **A little bit of sparkle**





Activity 7-1: What kinds of multimedia effects will you be using?

Type into the form below or print and complete by hand. List **multimedia effects** (if any) that you think might best accentuate your story. Examples include **relevant videos, animations, sound effects, music, sparkle**, and more.

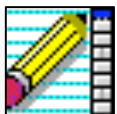
Videos and animations (such as any depicting real-life scenarios) – Identify and describe:

Applicable sound effects (but not too loud or annoyingly repetitive) – Identify and describe:

Subtle background music – Identify and describe:

A little bit of sparkle (tasteful accents) – Identify and describe:

Other effects – Identify and describe:



Activity 7-2: Reflections on Part 7

Type your thoughts into the form below and then save it, or print out the page and complete by hand.

Did identifying multimedia effects help you gain a clearer sense of what future audiences will experience? Explain.

Was it helpful to identify those effects well in advance of incorporating them into your slideshow? Explain.

When you've finished, proceed to the summary of what we've covered in this course!



Module Summary – Section 1: Crafting Your Message

In this module, you explored 7 major design dilemmas and related mistakes that many people make. Each section described a familiar dilemma, typical mistakes, and tips on resolving them.

In Section 1, Parts 1–3 focused on how to craft your message, which is a key to whether audiences either tune in, or tune out, to what you have to say.

Part 1 delved into brainstorming your topics, which is just the first step in shaping your narrative.

Mistake: If you tell your story as a series of unstructured “idea lists,” it forces your listeners to silently organize your thoughts.

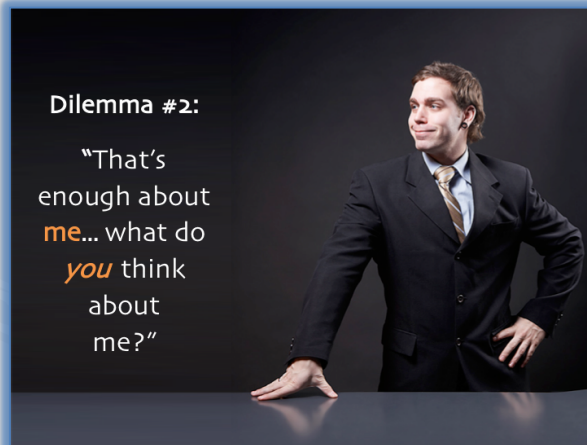
Part 2 discussed focusing on your audience. **Mistake:** If you make

your story all about *you*, it causes people to wonder if they have any part in your story, and what’s in it for *them*.

Part 3 covered paring down your topic list. **Mistake:** Telling people everything you know about your subject can reduce their attention and ability to absorb your message.

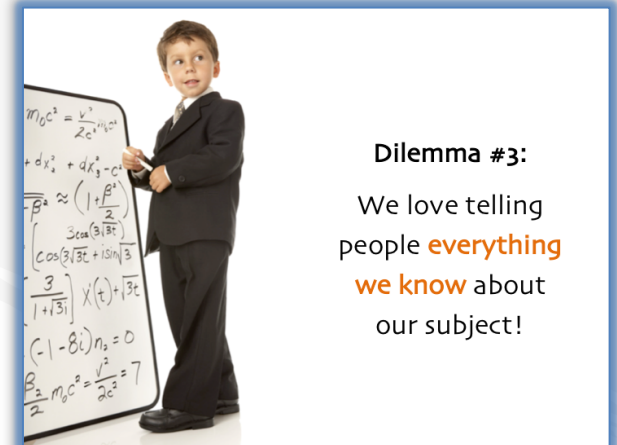


Dilemma #1: It’s natural to want to build a talk by quickly brainstorming “idea lists”



Dilemma #2:

“That’s enough about **me**... what do **you** think about me?”



Dilemma #3:

We love telling people **everything we know** about our subject!

Module Summary – Section 2: Designing Your Slides

In **Section 2**, **Parts 4–7** reoriented the focus to slide design and visual storytelling.

Part 4 delved into the importance of minimizing text on your slides, since many of us learned to use mostly text to get our ideas across visually. Why does that matter?

Mistake: Cramming your slides with dense text or lists can overload your viewers’ senses.

Part 5 explored selecting *relevant* graphics, since we often aren’t sure how to use graphics or why they’re important. They can be symbolic or factual, and take a variety of forms.

Mistake: Failure to use relevant images to support your message can hinder your attendees’ ability to anchor your ideas.

Not every picture is relevant; the right ones clarify your meaning, but the wrong ones can distract viewers by creating visual noise.

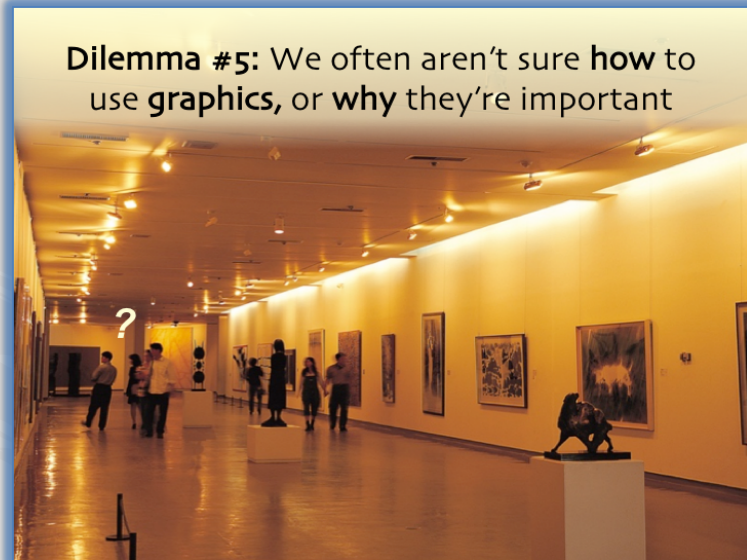
Dilemma #4: Many of us learned to use **mostly text** to get our ideas across visually



The History of Headaches

- Headaches were first recorded early in the twelfth century B.C. by ancient nomads
- The nomads roamed the world looking for a cure
- By the sixth century B.C., they had discovered a potentially causal link to boring presentations...

Dilemma #5: We often aren’t sure **how** to use **graphics**, or **why** they’re important



Module Summary – Section 2: Designing Your Slides (continued)

Part 6 examined simplifying complex images, since we often try to include too much detail on our slides, as well as in charts, diagrams, graphs, tables, and maps.

Mistake: Displaying elaborate detail in fact-based images tends to reduce your audience’s retention and recall.

Part 7 delved into choosing special effects to amplify your message. It’s tempting to want to spice things up with multimedia elements, but it’s vital to strike the right balance.

Mistake: If you use special effects excessively, you can overwhelm or divert your audience’s attention.

This is the end of the module...

By applying these principles and tips in your future presentations, you won’t just deliver memorable information to your audiences — you’ll also inspire them to *act!*

Continue to the **Activity Checklist** on the next page...



Use this **activity checklist** to track your progress as you wrap up this module.

Then keep it handy to refer to for your future creative endeavors.

Activity Checklist (Section 1 – Crafting Your Message)

Introduction to Crafting Your Message & Designing Your Slides

Gives a preview of building a compelling message and visual story.

Part 1: Brainstorming and Evaluating Your Topic Ideas

Introduces the first of seven presentation-design dilemmas, and begins exploring tips on crafting your message (Parts 1, 2, and 3)

- Activity 1-1:** Brainstorm and record your topic and subtopic ideas
- Activity 1-2:** Assess your topics from your audience's perspective
- Activity 1-3:** Reflections on Part 1

Part 2: Focusing on Your Audience Rather Than Yourself

If you make your message all about you, it can cause attendees to wonder if they have any part in your story and what's in it for them.

- Activity 2-1:** Put your topics through the "so what?" test
- Activity 2-2:** Reflections on Part 2

Part 3: Paring Down Your Topics to Avoid Audience Overload

Telling people everything you know about your subject reduces their attention, as well as their ability to absorb your key points.

- Activity 3-1:** Pinpoint your 3 to 4 main "suitcases" of ideas
- Activity 3-2:** Identify your highest-ranking subtopics
- Activity 3-3:** Reflections on Part 3

Use this **activity checklist** to track your progress as you wrap up this module.

Then keep it handy to refer to for your future creative endeavors.

Activity Checklist (Section 2 – Designing Your Slides)

Part 4: Reducing Text on Your Slides to Sharpen Your Message

Many of us learned to use mostly text on our slides, but cramming your slides with dense text and lists can overwhelm your viewers. Mapping content to your divider and detail slides in advance is a good way to avoid jamming them with text.

- Activity 4-1:** Map content to your 3–4 main “suitcases” of ideas (divider slides)
- Activity 4-2-1:** Map content to your suitcase #1 detail slides
- Activity 4-2-2:** Map content to your suitcase #2 detail slides
- Activity 4-2-3:** Map content to your suitcase #3 detail slides
- Activity 4-2-4:** Map content to your suitcase #4 detail slides
- Activity 4-3:** Reflections on Part 4

Part 5: Selecting Relevant Graphics to Support Your Narrative

We often aren't sure how or why to use graphics, yet failure to use relevant images can hinder people's ability to anchor your ideas.

- Activity 5.1:** Which THEMES and METAPHORS can best frame your story?
- Activity 5.2:** Which kinds of SYMBOLS would support your message effectively?
- Activity 5.3:** Which COLORS and FONTS blend with your visual vocabulary?
- Activity 5-4:** Reflections on Part 5

Section 2 continued on the next page...

Use this **activity checklist** to track your progress as you wrap up this module.

Then keep it handy to refer to for your future creative endeavors.

Activity Checklist (Section 2 – Designing Your Slides)

Part 6: Simplifying Complex Images to Increase Understanding

We frequently try to include too many fine points in our graphics, yet displaying excessive detail can decrease retention and recall.

- Activity 6-1:** What kinds of fact-based images will you be using?
- Activity 6-2:** Reflections on Part 6

Part 7: Choosing Special Effects Wisely to Amplify Your Message

It's tempting to want to spice things up, but it's vital to strike the right balance and avoid overly-distracting, non-relevant effects

- Activity 7-1:** What kinds of multimedia effects will you be using?
- Activity 7-2:** Reflections on Part 7

I hope you enjoyed this module and will take away **valuable insights** that you can apply to your very next project!

Whenever you create a new presentation or revise an existing one for different audiences or situations, you can always return to this module for guidance and inspiration.

About the Author

Adele Sommers, Ph.D. is a presentation strategist, instructional designer, and president of Business Performance Inc.

She has over two decades of experience with producing training in several different industries. Her mission is to help organizations simplify complex processes and information, and also support performers in achieving better outcomes on the job, in the classroom, and in other professional endeavors.

As a presentation and animation designer, Adele can help you **frame the story** around what your audience wants to hear — and needs to know — because she always starts off by using a presentation needs assessment.

She'll craft your productions **from scratch** when time and budget allow, creating a stellar, unforgettable message and highly actionable outcome.

Or she can **make over** your existing presentation using research-backed design principles that will amplify its effectiveness many times over.

She can also give **production advice** on how to convert your presentations into self-paced tutorials, classroom training, or online videos — or she can perform those services for you.

To learn more, visit Adele's website at [LearnShareProsper.com](https://www.learnshareprosper.com).